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Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-032 *15 February 1996*

CONTENTS

NOTICE: An * indicates material not previously disseminated in electronic form.

CHECHEN AFFAIRS

Terrorist Activity

Russia: Chechen Field Commander Threatens Terrorist Action *[Radio Rossii]* 1
Russia: Chechens Change Conditions for Builders' Release *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Russia: Dudayev Supporters Reportedly Pay $500,000 for Rally *[INTERFAX]* 1
Russia: Negotiations With Chechen Forces on Hostages Begin *[INTERFAX]* 1
Russia: Chechen Hostage To Be Released Following Islamic Trial *[INTERFAX]* 2
Russia: Impact of Chechnya War on Railroad Traffic Viewed *[PRAVDA 14 Feb]* 2

Military Activity

Russia: Army Demolishing Presidential Palace in Groznyy *[AFP]* 2
Russia: Troop Pullout From Three Chechen Districts Expected *[INTERFAX]* 2
Russia: Gen Shkirko: Too Early To Pull Troops Out of Chechnya *[INTERFAX]* 3
Russia: Chechen Village Signs Peace Protocol With Russians *[INTERFAX]* 3
Russia: Planned Rotation of Troops in Chechnya To Begin 17 Feb *[INTERFAX]* 3

Political Reaction

Russia: Yeltsin Hopes Chechen Problem Over Before Elections *[ITAR-TASS]* 4
Russia: Yeltsin Gives Nemstov 'Tongue-Lashing' Over Chechnya *[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 14 Feb]* 4
Russia: Zavgayev Believes Chechen War 'Practically Over' *[ITAR-TASS]* 5
Russia: Chechnya Commission Features Familiar Faces *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 15 Feb]* 5
Russia: Three Deputies To Join Chechnya Working Group *[INTERFAX]* 6
Russia: Tatar President Proposes Chechen Settlement *[Moscow RTV]* 6
Russia: Gromov Calls For Troop Withdrawal From Chechnya *[ITAR-TASS]* 6

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

CIS: Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh Experts Discuss Cooperation *[NARODNOYE SLOVO 14 Feb]* 8
CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 15 February 8

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Decree on Sending Troops to Bosnia *[ITAR-TASS]* 10
Russia: UN Envoy Lavrov Cited on Lifting Bosnia Sanctions *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 Feb]* 10
Russia: Indictment of Serb Officers Seen as 'Lawlessness' *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 15 Feb]* 10
Russia: Primakov, France's de Charette Discuss Former Yugoslavia *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Russia: Chernomyrdin-Juppe Commission To Increase Economic Ties *[INTERFAX]* 11
Russia: Grachev on Withdrawal of Peacekeepers from Abkhazia *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Russia: Embassy Intruder Shot Dead During Disarmament Operation *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
Russia: Suicide of DPRK Intruder's to Embassy Reported *[Moscow International]* 12
Russia: Diplomat Calls DPRK Intruder 'Calm and Balanced' *[ITAR-TASS]* 13
Russia: Embassy Intruder Described as 'Mentally Sick' *[ITAR-TASS]* 13
Russia: Karasin: Ayslum Request Not To Affect DPRK Relations *[ITAR-TASS]* 13

Russia: Chernychev on Embassy Incident, DPRK Relations *[INTERFAX]* 14
Russia: Government To Increase Defense Supplies to Iran *[INTERFAX]* 14
Russia: Foreign Ministry Official Welcomes Iraqi Statement *[ITAR-TASS]* 14
Russia: Ministry Denies Signing $10 Billion Iraqi Oil Contract *[INTERFAX]* 15
Russia: U.S. Flexing 'Muscles' Toward PRC Seen Election-Related *[IZVESTIYA 15 Feb]* 15
Russia: Removal of Ukraine Chief of Staff Lopata Viewed *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 Feb]* 16
Russia: Accord Signed on EU Finance for Judicial Reform *[ITAR-TASS]* 16
Russia: Primakov, Slovakia's Sestak Meet on Security Issues *[Bratislava TV]* 17
Russia: Russian-Polish Roundtable Discusses NATO Enlargement *[PRAVDA 14 Feb]* 17
Russia: Swedish Foreign Minister For Expanding Ties With Russia *[ITAR-TASS]* 18
Russia: Special Services Actions in Germany Viewed *[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 28 Jan-4 Feb]* .. 18

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Officially Announces Decision To Run *[ITAR-TASS]* 22
Russia: Yeltsin's Yekaterinburg Address Summarized *[ITAR-TASS]* 22
Russia: Analyst Notes Yeltsin's Electoral Strategy *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 13 Feb]* 22
Russia: Shumeyko Justifies Backing Yeltsin for President *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 14 Feb]* . 25
Russia: Zyuganov Collects Over 2 Million Signatures *[INTERFAX]* 26
Russia: CPRF Nominates Zyuganov for Presidency *[ITAR-TASS]* 26
Russia: Zyuganov Calls Yeltsin 'Weak Rival' *[INTERFAX]* 26
Russia: 'Rumors' Question CPRF's Desire To Gain Power *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 14 Feb]* 27
Russia: Medvedev Remarks on Yeltsin's Visit to Urals *[INTERFAX]* 28
Russia: Yeltsin, Prosecutor Discuss Law Enforcement *[ITAR-TASS]* 28
Russia: Yeltsin's Control Administration Chief Resigns *[ITAR-TASS]* 29
Russia: New Representatives Explain Yeltsin's Choice *[SEGODNYA 14 Feb]* 29
Russia: Deputy Premier on Privatization, New Policy *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 13 Feb]* 30
Russia: Justice Minister Discusses Reform Issues *[TRUD 13 Feb]* 31
Russia: Federation Council Chair Stroyev Profiled *[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 28 Jan-4 Feb]* 34
Russia: Medvedev Details New Procedure for Edicts *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 14 Feb]* 36
Russia: Differences Over Budget Funding Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 14 Feb]* 37
Russia: European Left, Russian Communists Compared *[MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 28 Jan-4 Feb]* 38

Military Issues

Russia: Grachev Seen Ignoring Yeltsin Order To Fire Finance Chief *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 15 Feb]* 39
Russia: Grachev Accused of Violating Law in Land Deal *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 15 Feb]* 40
Russia: State Owes Defense Industry R9 Trillion *[Moscow Radio]* 40
Russia: General Staff Discusses Resolving Military Conflicts *[ITAR-TASS]* 40

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Fails To Overrule Veto on Military Service Law *[INTERFAX]* 40
Russia: Social Laws To Be Based on 'Real Economic Situation' *[ITAR-TASS]* 41

Regional Affairs

Russia: Yeltsin in Yekaterinburg: Comments on Chechnya *[Moscow RTV]* 41
Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Elections at Yekaterinburg Airport *[Moscow RTV]* 42
Russia: Yeltsin 'Not Satisfied' With Army Reforms *[ITAR-TASS]* 42
Russia: Yeltsin Notes That Inflation Has 'Dropped Appreciably' *[ITAR-TASS]* 43

Russia: Yeltsin's Activities in Yekaterinburg Shown *[Moscow RTV]* 43
Russia: Yeltsin Visit Elicits Mixed Feelings in Yekaterinburg *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 14 Feb]* 43
Russia: Urals Electorate Seen Unlikely To Support Yeltsin *[IZVESTIYA 15 Feb]* 45
Russia: Patriotic Union Vernost Criticizes Yeltsin *[RUSSKIY VOSTOK Feb]* 46
Russia: Chernomyrdin on Economy During Visit to Gas Pipeline *[Moscow RTV]* 47
Russia: Far East TU Chair Warns Grachev of 'Social Explosion' *[PRAVDA 15 Feb]* 47
Russia: Moscow Metro Takes Precautions Against Terrorism *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 14 Feb]* 47
Russia: Belgorod FSB Antiterrorist Exercise Ends in Fiasco *[TRUD 14 Feb]* 48
Russia: Black Sea Fleet Breakup Now 'Complete' *[Moscow RTV]* 48
Russia: Proceedings at Tatarstan CP Congress Reported *[PRAVDA 15 Feb]* 48
Russia: Norwegian Space Probe Falls to Earth in Urals *[Radio Rossii]* 48

Economic Issues

Russia: Economic Reform Seen Hinging on IMF, Creditor Support *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 14 Feb]* 49
Russia: Government Approves Agricultural Program *[INTERFAX]* 50
Russia: Kadannikov Counsels Against Import Restrictions *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 14 Feb]* 50
Russia: Expert Discusses State of Russian Economy *[SEGODNYA 14 Feb]* 51
Russia: Federal Program To Revive Engineering Industry *[TRUD 14 Feb]* 51
Russia: 'Routine Indexation' Increase for Rail Freight *[TRUD 14 Feb]* 51
Russia: Committee Head Goes to Africa Despite Investigation *[SEGODNYA 13 Feb]* 51

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Ukraine: Official on Country's Goals, NATO Expansion *[DEMOKRATYCHNA UKRAYINA 3 Feb]* 53
Ukraine: Power Supply Problems After Disconnection From Russian Grid *[ITAR-TASS]* 55
Ukraine: Russian Radio Taken Off Ukrainian Airwaves *[KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA 31 Jan]* 56
Ukraine: Relations With Romania Reviewed *[ZERKALO NEDELI 3-9 Feb]* 56

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma To Appoint Permanent Envoy to Transdniester *[INTERFAX]* 58
Ukraine: Cabinet Denies Accepting Senchenko as Crimean Premier *[UNIAN]* 59
Ukraine: Spokesman on 'Discrimination' Against Russians in Crimea *[INTERFAX]* 59
Ukraine: Electricity Supply 'Dangerously Low' After Russian Cut *[INTELNEWS]* 59
Ukraine: Chernobyl Will Not Close by 2000 *[IZVESTIYA 15 Feb]* 60
Ukraine: TU Officials Cited on Mine Strike *[TRUD 14 Feb]* 61

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Energy Workers Said in 'Complicated Situation' *[INTERFAX]* 61
Ukraine: Large Oil Reserves Found in Sumy Oblast *[HOLOS UKRAYINY 13 Feb]* 61
Ukraine: Parliament Modifies Minimum Wage, Pension Increases *[INTELNEWS]* 61

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Belarus: Prime Minister Views 'Problems' With IMF *[Minsk TV]* 63
Belarus: Lukashenka Says No Soldiers Will Fight Abroad *[INTERFAX]* 63
Belarus: Lukashenka Dismisses Defense Ministry Officials *[Minsk Radio]* 63

Belarus: Economic Accords With Russia To Be Initialed *[Minsk Radio]* 63

Moldova

Moldova: International Forces 'May Be Deployed' in Transdniester *[INTERFAX]* 64
Moldova: Diacov Advocates Compromise on Language Issue *[BASAPRESS]* 64

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Foreign Minister, Primakov To Discuss NATO Expansion *[ITAR-TASS]* 65
Kazakhstan: Tokayev on China Border Confidence-Building *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 Feb]* .. 65
Kazakhstan: Details on Chevron Oil Workers' Dissatisfaction *[KARAVAN-BLITS 7 Feb]* 65

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan: Presidential Address on Nationwide Referendum *[Bishkek Radio]* 66

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Foreign Minister Affirms Commitment to Peace *[ITAR-TASS]* 67
Tajikistan: ITAR-TASS Report on Negotiations Denied *[Voice of Free Tajikistan]* 68

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan: Border Guard Chiefs Report on Events of 1995 *[ESGER 1 Feb]* 68

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Armenia: Deputy Speaker Meets Greek Speaker During Athens Visit *[Yerevan International]* 70
Armenia: Party Leader, Deputy Minister Said To Oppose Gobel Plan *[Yerevan International]* 70
Armenia: Russia's Nikolayev Suggests 'Common Security System' *[NOYAN TAPAN]* 70
Armenia: Karabakh 'President' Discusses U.S. Trip *[NOYAN TAPAN]* 70

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Receives Russia's Frontier Chief Nikolayev *[Baku Radio]* 71
Azerbaijan: Prospect for Oil Wealth Impact Downplayed *[ZERKALO 3 Feb]* 71

Georgia

Georgia: Ardzinba Agrees To Join Two-Component Georgian Federation *[IBERIA]* 73
Georgia: Ardzinba, Grachev Discuss Abkhaz Peace-Keeping *[IBERIA]* 73
Georgia: Moscow Agrees to Georgian Observers on Abkhaz Border *[ITAR-TASS]* 73

BALTIC STATES

Estonia

Estonia: Foreign Minister Views Relations With Russia *[BNS]* 74
Estonia: Yeltsin To Sign Decree Threatening Freight Transit *[Tallinn Radio]* 74

Lithuania

Lithuania: Peacekeepers To Leave for Bosnia 19 Feb *[Vilnius Radio]* 74
Lithuania: Seimas Approves New Prime Minister *[Vilnius Radio]* 75
Lithuania: Background on New Prime Minister Stankevicius *[ITAR-TASS]* 75
Lithuania: Parliament Endorses New Bank Chairman *[Vilnius Radio]* 75

Terrorist Activity

Russia: Chechen Field Commander Threatens Terrorist Action

LD1502065396 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0400 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chechen field commander Salman Raduyev has expressed a willingness to exchange the 12 militiamen from Novosibirsk for nine armed fighters from his group who were taken prisoner by the federal troops in Pervomayskoye. This was reported to INTERFAX by Magomed Guseynov, one of the leaders of the popular movement of Dagestan, after talks with Raduyev. At the same time, according to Guseynov, Raduyev threatened that if the exchange does not take place within the next five or six days he is ready to carry out yet another act of terrorism and seizure of hostages.

Russia: Chechens Change Conditions for Builders' Release

LD1402165596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1616 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Mansur Magomadov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — Chechen rebels have changed their conditions for the release of 36 Russian builders and demanded the participation of federal authorities in the talks.

Ilias Agayev, who represents the hostages' interests, said that the talks with Chechen rebels will continue on Friday.

Earlier, rebels proposed to release the builders for a ransom of 10 million roubles for each hostage.

"At present the main thing demanded by the kidnappers is money. They want ten million roubles for each of the hostages. We agree to meet this demand," Agayev said.

According to Chechen law enforcement agencies, other hostages, specifically two clergymen — Father Sergey and Father Anatoliy — and two members of the Chechen government — Lechi Saligov and Yefim Gelman — as well as 19 energy workers, are alive and in good health.

Meanwhile, the Chechen government is continuing work to free the hostages and find those who are reported missing. The efforts are being coordinated Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Magomed Bamatgireyev.

"Civilian hostage taking runs counter to the traditions of highland nations and hurts the feelings of Moslems," a Chechen government spokesman stressed.

Russia: Dudayev Supporters Reportedly Pay $500,000 for Rally

LD1402161496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1423 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — It cost $500,000 for supporters of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev to hold the recent anti-government meeting in front of the former presidential palace in the capital Groznyy, Chechen Interior Minister Khamid Inalov told a government session.

Adam Ablakov, one of Chechnya' richest people who is close to Dzhokhar Dudayev, paid for the anti-government meeting, according to Inalov. When Dudayev was president, not a single tonne of oil left Chechen territory without his and Ablakov's signatures, he said.

Each rally participant who brought five to ten people to the square received 50 to 100 dollars, said Inalov.

"Dudayev's party will not begrudge the money in order to turn the meeting devoted to the memory of victims of deportation of the Chechen people scheduled for February 23 into an anti-government rally," Inalov said.

He assumed that this was why Dudayev's fighters are keeping 29 Russian power plant workers hostage and demanding a ransom worth $600,000.

Russia: Negotiations With Chechen Forces on Hostages Begin

LD1402161196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1422 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KHASAVYURT, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Consultations with Chechen militants on the liberation of 12 Novosibirsk police officers are being resumed in Chechnya Wednesday [14 February].

On Wednesday morning, a Dagestan delegation consisting of representatives of the government and national movements flew out to the Chechen village of Novogroznenskiy, where the previous round of consultations had been held.

The delegates are to meet with Chechen rebel commander Aslan Maskhadov.

The demands of the Chechen side remain the same: The exchange of all the policemen for all militants seized by the federal troops in Pervomayskoye last January.

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Russia: Chechen Hostage To Be Released Following Islamic Trial

LD1502120596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1059 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] URUS-MARTAN (Chechnya), Feb 15 (INTERFAX) — Chechen government member Lecha Saligov held hostage by the militants will be released after being tried by a sharia court, which will take place when the sacred month of Ramadan is over. The Muslim fast ends on February 20.

INTERFAX's correspondent learned this from a field commander in the town of Urus-Martan located 20 kilometers southwest of Grozny.

Saligov, who leads the committee on publications and book trade in Chechnya's government, was kidnapped in late January on his way from Achkhoy-Martan in western Chechnya. He is charged with treason.

According to the field commander, the sharia court has not taken place yet, and no verdict has been pronounced. He said the government member will probably be punished with several hundred cane strikes.

Russia: Impact of Chechnya War on Railroad Traffic Viewed

MM1402162496 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Marlen Kryukov: "Road Has Become Warpath"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Chechya war has been a huge disaster for the North Caucasus railroad. It has brought much destruction and human misery. Lives have been lost among the railway workers also. What joy people felt when, after the first battles, they nevertheless managed to get the trains running along such routes as the Makhachkala-Moscow and Groznyy-Moscow lines and the subway trains started running again. But the war has again killed off life on the railroads.

Three branches of the railroad are currently effectively not in operation. Some 400 km of track and over 20 bridges have been damaged. Overhead catenary systems have been disabled over a wide area. The ruined stations gape like empty eye sockets, and many houses, kindergartens, and other buildings erected by the efforts of the railroad have been completely destroyed. Many trains from the Caucasus to Moscow have had to be canceled. There is no point in driving empty trains there and back. Since February Krasnodar-Moscow express trains and the Almavir-Moscow fast train have been withdrawn. Trains from Vladikavkaz and Kislovodsk have become rarer.

Another sign of the war — not much more freight is conveyed on the entire North Caucasus railway these days than was carried on the Rostov branch alone five years ago. There are far fewer passengers. And all this means losses. Even according to approximate estimates, the Chechnya war has inflicted losses of more than 1 trillion rubles on the North Caucasus railway. This, one of the oldest and most celebrated railroads, which is over 6,000 km long, recently celebrated its 132d birthday. The war singed this date with its ruthless fire.

Military Activity

Russia: Army Demolishing Presidential Palace in Groznyy

AU1502095296 Paris AFP in English 0943 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, Russia, Feb 15 (AFP) — Russian forces Thursday began demolishing the presidential palace in Groznyy, a potent symbol of Chechen separatists' year-long defiance of Russian forces.

Glass was blown out of windows of neighboring buildings up to 200 meters away and a large cloud of dust was thrown up into the sky when a powerful explosion destroyed a third of the bombed-out building at noon (0900 GMT) an AFP correspondent said.

Russia: Troop Pullout From Three Chechen Districts Expected

LD1402201396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — The Chechen government does not rule out the possibility that federal troops may start to pull out from the Shali, Gudermes and Urus-Martan districts within the next few days, Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Abdulla Bugayev told INTERFAX Tuesday.

The three districts show an obvious trend toward stabilization, Bugayev said. "Moreover, the Chechen government has been receiving an enormous number of appeals from the residents of these districts, where they only welcome the troop pullout from their land," he said.

The start of the troop withdrawal will be a "prologue to the return to last July's peace accord," Bugayev said.

In July 1995, the federal authorities and militants loyal to Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev signed a military agreement which coordinated the rebels' disarmament with the complete troop pullout, except for two interior brigades.

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Bugayev described as "promising" the trend that has recently emerged in the negotiation process. "Pro-Dudayev field commanders have been more often expressing readiness to talk with us through third parties," he said.

This process is extremely important, "independent of whether we manage to agree with these people," Bugayev said. The main thing is that Dudayev is losing his potential basis, which is very symbolic, he said.

Bugayev is convinced the political dialogue inside Chechnya should be intensified. "We can tidy up in our home by ourselves," he said.

Russia: Gen Shkirko: Too Early To Pull Troops Out of Chechnya

LD1402160896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1422 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Lt. Gen. Anatoliy Shkirko, the commander of Russian troops in Chechnya, said it is too early to pull out from Chechnya despite the establishment of "peace zones" in the rebel region.

The signing of a protocol of peace and accord "is only a declaration of goodwill, which has yet to be backed up by real deeds," Shkirko said in an exclusive interview with INTERFAX on Wednesday.

He believes that at this point it would be premature not only to withdraw troops from the republic, but even to move them to different positions.

He stressed that the withdrawal of troops from some Chechen regions will hinge on the viability of trilateral peace agreements reached lately in some villages.

On Tuesday, Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev told INTERFAX that over 30 villages had already signed such agreements to set up peace zones and about 20 more wanted to follow suit.

However, experience shows that the implementation of protocols, including provisions on disarmament, do not always go smoothly, Shkirko pointed out.

For example, in Kadi-Yurt in eastern Chechnya only six sub-machine guns and one grenade launcher have been turned in.

In Novogroznenskiy, the situation is pretty much the same as only 23 sub-machine guns have been surrendered so far.

The general said the federal command had given the local authorities 24 hours to comply with their disarmament obligations.

At the same time, Shkirko believes that despite various excesses, the situation in Chechnya is beginning, albeit slowly, to normalize and move along the path of peace.

He noted that the December events in Gudermes, the January raid on Kizlyar and a recent opposition rally in Groznyy reflect the agony of the Dudayev regime.

"The opposition is convulsively trying to change the situation, but experience shows that the situation in Chechnya is stabilizing, although perhaps not as rapidly as we want," he said.

Russia: Chechen Village Signs Peace Protocol With Russians

LD1402233696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2044 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Residents of the Kadi-Yurt village in Chechnya's Gudermes region, to the east of the Chechen capital Groznyy, today signed a protocol on peace and accord with representatives of the Russian federal command and handed in their weapons, the federal troops press center told INTERFAX.

The residents of Kadi-Yurt handed in nine automatic weapons and 100 cartridges.

Under the protocol, Kadi-Yurt residents recognize the Moscow-backed Chechen government led by Doku Zavgayev and agree not to let militants under Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev come to the village, the same source said.

Russian Interior Ministry units and the Chechen police checked the passports of Kadi-Yurt residents on the same day, the same source said.

The residents did not inhibit the passport control operation, the same source said.

The village of Kadi-Yurt was the fifth populated area of the Gudermes region to sign protocols on peace and accord with the Russian federal command, following the villages of Gerzel-Aul, Suvorov-Yurt, Nizhniy Suvorov-Yurt and Koshkeldy. Earlier, these villages were controlled by Dudayev's separatist formations.

Russia: Planned Rotation of Troops in Chechnya To Begin 17 Feb

LD1402204496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — The planned rotation of the Russian Interior Ministry interior troops units in Chechnya will begin on February 17-18, a representative of the main department

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of the commander of interior troops under the Russian Interior Ministry told INTERFAX Wednesday.

The replacement operation will last for ten days and will be carried out in all Chechen areas where interior troops are deployed, the same source said.

"Fresh" units will be delivered to Chechnya by railway rather than by air transport as it was done earlier because of the shortage of funds, the same source said. Only personnel will be brought to Chechnya. New servicemen will inherit military hardware from their predecessors, the same source said.

Nearly all districts of interior troops will send new servicemen to Chechnya, the same source said.

Political Reaction

Russia: Yeltsin Hopes Chechen Problem Over Before Elections

LD1502111896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1056 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Nadezhda Potapova, Andrey Surzhansky, and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEKATERINBURG, February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — The hostilities in Chechnya will be ended before the presidential elections. President Boris Yeltsin expressed this hope to ITAR-TASS here today during the wreath-laying ceremony at the "Black Tulip" monument to heroes of the Afghan War. "We are now working to soft-pedal the hostilities in Chechnya and to eventually restore peace there so that there would be no war in that republic," the President stressed.

Recalling that several servicemen of the federal troops were now being killed in Chechnya every day, Yeltsin said that this was absolutely impermissible. Yeltsin stressed that "18-year-old lads without any fighting experience are being sent there against armed to the teeth professionals, who were trained in Turkey, Iran, and some other countries".

The President noted that Dudayev's men were launching from twenty to thirty raids every day. "It is our duty to defend the local population, otherwise they will all be massacred. If we withdraw our troops today, all the remaining peaceful population will be slaughtered," the President added. "We cannot do this. I am urged to withdraw the troops, but this is a far from easy task. We have the example of Afghanistan before our eyes. The civil war flared up with new force there after the withdrawal of our troops."

Touching on the prospects for a settlement in Chechnya, Yeltsin said that federal "troops would be stationed there, as on the entire territory of Russia, as in every subject of the Federation" after the withdrawal of the main part of the federal contingent.

Russia: Yeltsin Gives Nemstov 'Tongue-Lashing' Over Chechnya

MM1502091896 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Nikolay Yefimovich under the "Bringing You the Details" rubric: "Nemtsov's Personal Dossier Comes Under Scrutiny"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nizhniy Novgorod — One of Yeltsin's favorite governors for several years, Boris Nemtsov, is now in disgrace. At the latest Presidential Council session, Boris Nikolayevich did not conceal his irritation when he condemned the initiative taken by the head of Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast Administration: Nemtsov has collected a million signatures in his province, demanding an end to the war in Chechnya.

The "tongue-lashing" endured by the well-known governor did not end there. A closed meeting between Yeltsin and a group of heads of administration from various regions was the scene of a conversation which, according to Boris Nemtsov himself, resembled an investigation into his personal dossier. Admittedly, Nizhniy Novgorod's governor did not hear the fatal words "You are wrong, Boris!" Evidently because Boris Nikolayevich could have interpreted them as being directed at him. A large measure of the guilty governor's dressing-down was devoted to a readers' letter carried on the front page of ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA under the heading "Politicians' Machinations." Unfortunately, one of the readers concerned is no ordinary mortal: He is senior secretary of Nizhniy Novgorod's "Right Bank" movement. The point is that the leader of this organization is a former old friend of Nemtsov: A businessman called Klimentyev who is currently in solitary confinement accused of embezzling hard currency credit received from the state. Incidentally, "Right Bank" has already published its own angry letter in the local press, but strictly as an advertisement. In short, the move of the month — as MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI calls Nemtsov's initiative — has backfired on Nizhniy Novgorod's governor.

Despite the cold shower he has received from the president, Nemtsov still intends to support Yeltsin in the forthcoming elections. But on one condition: If he ends the war in Chechnya.

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Russia: Zavgayev Believes Chechen War 'Practically Over'

LD1502092696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0920 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Mansur Magomadov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — Chechen pro-Moscow leader Doku Zavgayev believes the war in Chechnya is "practically over" and it is possible to start a gradual withdrawal of federal troops after "establishing strong local authorities", according to his spokesman Ruslan Martagov.

He told the Chechen VAYNAKH news agency on Thursday that the "authorities practically every day receive reports about the readiness of residents of more and more settlements to join the protocol on peace and accord".

Besides, the public and political council of Chechnya, which unites elders and religious leaders, has "expressed full readiness to cooperate with the government of the republic", according to Martagov.

It is believed that the Gudermes, Urus-Martan and Naurskiy regions of Chechnya would follow suit of the Shatoy region, which has declared itself "a zone of peace".

Martagov said a government delegation has to return from those regions today where it held talks on disarmament of the population and withdrawal of federal forces.

"The main task of the trip was to meet the residents of 20 settlements who have stated their readiness for a full cooperation with authorities in pacifying the situation in the republic", Martagov said.

Russia: Chechnya Commission Features Familiar Faces

MK1502101296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Ivan Rodin under the "Parliament" rubric: "Chernomyrdin To Form a Commission. Peacekeepers Include Many Respected Specialists on Nationalities Question"]

[FBIS Translated Text] State Duma deputies do not yet know for sure which of them might have been included on the commission tasked with drawing up a peace plan for a Chechnya settlement, the list of whose members Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin passed to President Yeltsin straight from Sochi.

State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev told your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent, however, that only one or two deputies would be placed on the interdepartmental commission, one of whom he can already name almost with absolute certainty. In all likelihood, it will be Vladimir Zorin, a deputy from the "Russia Is Our Home" [NDR] faction, former acting chief of the Territorial Administration of Federal Authorities in Chechnya. He chairs the State Duma commission that also intends to draw up a plan for a peaceful settlement of the Chechnya crisis. For this reason, Mr. Seleznev thinks, he is a sure pick for the Chernomyrdin commission. Yet, this is only a suggestion by the State Duma chairman, because the commission's lineup has yet to be approved by the president and the deputies have not yet received any written invitations.

Still, Mr. Seleznev's theory not only can, but, evidently, must be accepted. Vladimir Zorin is suitable for work on the prime minister's interdepartmental commission not only owing to his Duma post; he also fits in because his views on ways to achieve a Chechnya settlement largely coincide with those of a considerable number of commission members. It is well known that these include Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who has always preferred quick methods based on the use of force to lengthy peace talks; and Federal Security Service [FSB] chief Mikhail Barsukov, whose view on the nature and habits of all Chechens without exception was expressed in public.

In short, the interdepartmental commission will be a forum where long-acquainted people will meet each other, such as the two aforementioned gentlemen; Oleg Lobov, appointed as Yeltsin's governor general in Chechnya; Nikolay Yegorov, fired from his ministerial post after the terrorist act in Budennovsk; that same Vladimir Zorin; and Federal Border Service [FPS] Director Andrey Nikolayev. The other commission members, to all appearances, will either play a purely ceremonial role (such as Vladimir Kadannikov) or, like Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Ignatenko and the chiefs of the first two television channels, will be called upon to ensure a propaganda cover for the so-called "... methods of a peaceful settlement."

By the way, yesterday's comments by deputies dealing with or taking interest in the settlement were largely pessimistic. Valeriy Borshchev from "Yabloko," for one, thinks that the commission's lineup should be changed even before it has been approved by the president. As a matter of fact he pointed out the absence of Arkadiy Volskiy on the list, a person who, in his view, was able to achieve at least something. State Duma deputy Sergey Yushenkov, for his part, likened the power ministers' involvement in drafting the peace plans to having the cow mind the corn. Yet, Viktor

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Ilyukhin, chairman of the State Duma Committee on Security, on the contrary, thinks that servicemen are precisely the most peaceloving people.

Interestingly, a possible peaceful solution to the Chechnya crisis is bound up with the Duma faction of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation [CPRF] and this party in general. Duma sources have told your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent that people from Gennadiy Zyuganov's entourage have already met with Dzhokhar Dudayev's men, and it is quite possible that the hypothetical Communist president might pay his first visit to Chechnya to meet with the rebellious general. Evidently for this reason the Communists are fairly indifferent to the executive authority's activity in this segment of Boris Yeltsin's election campaign. They can stay calm — technically, the CPRF and its leaders are untainted by the Chechnya dirt.

Russia: Three Deputies To Join Chechnya Working Group

LD1402201496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Three MPs, Ramazan Abdulatipov, Sergey Shakhray, and Vladimir Lysenko have been included in a working group set up to work out a plan to settle the Chechen crisis.

Lysenko, the leader of the Republican Party of Russia, told INTERFAX that the group, chaired by Emil Payin, member of the Presidential Council, will not rival that headed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin by order of the president.

"The higher the number of reasonable proposals on settlement of the Chechen crisis, the better," Lysenko believes.

All the three MPs have submitted their proposals to the group chairman, he said. The proposals will be discussed at the group's meeting next Tuesday. Lysenko believes that a report summarizing the group's opinions will be sent to the president before the February 25 deadline.

Lysenko himself advocates a staged withdrawal of federal troops from the Chechen Republic in three months, with simultaneous formation of a National Guard subordinated to the republic's Moscow-backed leader Doku Zavgayev. "Once this process is over, peace talks have to be held between (Chechen separatist leader) Dzhokhar Dudayev's units and Zavgayev's National Guard without federal officials," Lysenko said.

Russia: Tatar President Proposes Chechen Settlement

LD1502105396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0500 GMT 15 Feb 96

[Correspondent I. Murtazin report from Tatarstan; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev has put forward his proposal for settling the Chechen crisis. Among other things, Shaymiyev spoke of the need for a general amnesty including an amnesty for Dzhokhar Dudayev. It would then be necessary to start the talks process with the participation of Dudayev, Doku Zavgayev, and representatives of the federal government at the deputy prime minister level, invested with all necessary powers, including the special political status of Chechnya [sentence as heard]. Intermediaries and guarantors in the form of representatives of the Council of Heads of Republics and the Council of Governors [heads of administration] of Russia should be included in the talks process, in the opinion of Shaymiyev. Yeltsin should sign agreements with these on mutual obligations to settle the Chechen crisis.

A necessary condition for the talks to begin is the simultaneous withdrawal of the federal troops and disarmament of the fighters. After Chechnya is demilitarized, new democratic elections for Chechen state authorities should, in the opinion of Shaymiyev, be held. After making his statement, Shaymiyev was asked about the possibility of support for Yeltsin in the presidential election in the event of the Chechen question not being settled. He said:

[Begin Shaymiyev recording] I am making this proposal in order for us to be able to support Yeltsin without a war in Chechnya. That is why I am making this proposal. [end recording] [Video shows shows Kazan streets, Shaymiyev addressing reporters]

Russia: Gromov Calls For Troop Withdrawal From Chechnya

LD1402160796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1542 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — Russia should have rendered help to Afghanistan but not by sending troops there, former commander of the 40th army Boris Gromov said.

On Wednesday, on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the withdrawal of the Soviet limited contingent from

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this country, Gromov held a news conference in the State Duma building.

The general who is a deputy of the lower house of parliament, cited the latest figures of the losses in Afghanistan. During combat operations 13,883 Soviet servicemen were killed, over 50,000 — wounded and 70,000 of participants in the war in Afghanistan had different diseases.

According to Boris Gromov, Soviet leaders, headed by Mikhail Gorbachev, "actually left Afghanistan to the mercy of fate" after the withdrawal of Russian troops from this country in February, 1989.

As a result, the Soviet Union, and later Russia, "had to deal with the events in Tajikistan which requires more financial resources from Russia than during the war in Afghanistan," the general said.

Speaking about the situation in Chechnya, Gromov stressed that although there were seven or eight versions of the termination of this unpopular war, the "main point of the programme should be a withdrawal of the Russian troops from this republic."

The deputy of the State Duma considers that Moscow-backed head of the Chechen republic Doku Zavgayev has no fewer supporters in the country than rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Gromov noted that the problem is to come into contacts with all warring sides which "should sign a ceasefire memorandum."

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CIS: Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh Experts Discuss Cooperation

LD1402145896 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting of a group of experts from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, led by Kazakh First Deputy Prime Minister Nigmetzhan Isingarin, Kyrgyz Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Moiseyev and Uzbek First Deputy Prime Minister Ismail Jurabekov was held in Tashkent on 12 February.

The experts discussed documents drawn up by ministries and departments in the participating states on such topical matters as rational use of fuel, power and water resources, construction, and use of gas pipelines in the Central Asian region, a coordinated policy in transport and communications aimed at carrying out effective transportation of freight and passengers, and a number of other topical subjects.

The discussion and adoption of these documents at the forthcoming meeting of the council of the prime ministers of the participating states will be of great importance in the deepening of further integration among our states.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 15 February

LD1502073996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0625 GMT 15 Feb 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers.

IZVESTIYA on Communists' action programme if their candidate wins the forthcoming presidential elections.

"How the Communists intend to correct the faults of the Democrats" is the headline under which the newspaper carries a dialogue between Yuri Feofanov, Editor-in-Chief of Zakon (Law) magazine, and Yuriy Ivanov, lawyer who defended the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during proceedings in the Constitutional Court and who is now Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Legislation. The newspaper's analyst regards Ivanov's remarks as an action programme of the Communists if their candidate wins the forthcoming presidential elections.

IZVESTIYA, in a brief report from Yekaterinburg, where Russian President Boris Yeltsin has arrived, writes about the lack of unity among the directors of the leading enterprises of the city and the region about the idea of nominating Boris Yeltsin a presidential candidate despite great pressure on them on the part of Region Governor Eduard Rossel.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on the probability of advent of extremist forces to power.

Some industrial directors have stated that businesses and free enterprise have been stifled by officials and taxes with the president's connivance. The people's patience is already running out, as the Uralmash General Director has pointed out. In such an atmosphere, the advent of extremist forces to power is quite probable, the article points out.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI runs a review of letters coming in to the Kremlin.

Letters are published under the headline "Boris Yeltsin is Russia's best presidential candidate from the reformers". According to the newspaper, a majority of the authors of letters to the Kremlin declare in support of the idea of nominating the incumbent president.

IZVESTIYA on sentiments among Russians who fought in Chechnya.

The "Chechen syndrome" suffered by many of those who fought in Chechnya may lead to Russia's repeating the sad fate of the Soviet Union after the war in Afghanistan, points out a dispatch by the newspaper's correspondent from Kuzbass.

"Dudayev has kept his word: terror has penetrated the remotest parts of Russia. Acting as terrorists are our children who have been seared by the spirit of war", the correspondent writes.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on the status of CIS peacekeeping force in Tajikistan.

The newspaper carries an interview with Lieutenant-General Viktor Zavarzin, Commander of the CIS collective peacekeeping force (CPF) in Tajikistan. Speaking about a status of the CPF, he said that "the presence of CPF in Tajikistan is compulsory at the present stage irrespective of its status. The CPF really promotes a peaceful settlement of the inter-Tajik crisis. There is no alternative to CPF so far".

IZVESTIYA on a Pornography Bill's being pushed into the background.

Under the headline "Will the sexual revolution in Russia be strengthened by law?" the newspaper runs a report on the current work on a draft law on pornography. The State Duma has pushed into the background the document which is intended to protect the souls of under-age kids from pornographic products.

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ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on an exhibition of products resultant of defence-industry conversion.

The newspaper announces that 80 percent out 2,000 items, which are to be displayed at an exhibition, which opens at the Inter-Sectoral Research Data Institute on Thursday, are products of defence-industry conversion. The items include the world's only ground-effect vehicle (an aircraft and a ship at the same time), a fish concentrator which generates acoustic fields to attract fish, and a miniature washing machine — a plate the size of a child's palm which washes by means of ultrasound.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA reports that a house-museum of Mikhail Kalashnikov, the designer of the famous submachine-gun, is to be set up in Izhevsk. A wooden house, in which the designer's family lived for years, is to be reproduced.

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Russia: Yeltsin Signs Decree on Sending Troops to Bosnia

LD1402164995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1609 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 14 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree "On sending a contingent of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation to take part in the peacekeeping operation of the multinational forces to implement the general framework agreement on peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina".

The decree, the text of which was released today by the president's press service, provides for the dispatch of a Russian troop contingent of up to 1600 men, with the corresponding military equipment, arms, and property for the period up to 31 January 1997. The Russian contingent will be subordinate to Colonel-General Leontiy Shevtsov, deputy supreme head of the forces implementing the peace agreement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Russian Defense Ministry has been instructed to replace the personnel of the Russian troop contingent every six months. A number of instructions have been given to the Russian Government.

Russia: UN Envoy Lavrov Cited on Lifting Bosnia Sanctions

MM1402133496 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[ITAR-TASS report: "Moscow Insists on Lifting of Sanctions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Russia continues to hold the view that sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs must be lifted immediately after the disengagement of the sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as envisaged by the Dayton agreement. In our opinion, this disengagement has occurred," Sergey Lavrov, Russian Federation permanent representative at the United Nations, said. He was commenting on the discussion at private Security Council consultations of a letter from NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, in which he informed UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali that "in the opinion of the commander of the implementation force, Bosnian Serb forces have been withdrawn from areas due for transfer to another administrative entity."

"In other words, it is confirmed that Bosnian Serb forces have been pulled back two kilometers from their positions, which will create conditions for the lifting of international sanctions against the Serbs," S. Lavrov stressed. "The thrust of Resolution 222 is that the completion of the disengagement of the sides and the announcement of this to the Security Council are the starting point for the total suspension of sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs. And this should happen automatically. It requires neither decisions nor statements by the Security Council. And that is our perception of the announcements from the NATO secretary general, which are based on reports from the commander of the implementation force."

The Russian representative reported that a dispute had nonetheless arisen over whether this letter should be regarded as a report on the disengagement of forces, since it is signed by the NATO secretary general and not by the implementation force commander, as requested by the Security Council. "In our view," S. Lavrov said, the question is purely technical and we hope that those who are not entirely clear on the matter will be so in the very near future."

Russia: Indictment of Serb Officers Seen as 'Lawlessness'

MM1502093796 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Vladimir Kuznechevskiy: "This Is Something New. Serbian Parliamentarians Go to Talks and End Up Behind Bars in Another Country"]

[FBIS Summary] Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian on 15 Februray 1996 carries on page two under the headline "This Is Something New. Serbian Parliamentarians Go to Talks and End Up Behind Bars in Another Country" a 1,300-word Vladimir Kuznechevskiy report on the arrest of six Bosnian Serb officer members of a government delegation on suspicion of war crimes. Kuznechevskiy states that the arrest resulted in Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke flying urgently out to Sarajevo, where it was expected that he would tell the Sarajevo government that people cannot be arrested without any specific charges being made against them. But Holbrooke, Kuznechevskiy alleges, asked the Muslim government to produce compromising material against the six. Following the transfer of two of the officers — General Djukic and Colonel Krsmanovic — to stand trial before the war crimes tribunal in the Hague, Kuznechevskiy notes that "there is no Russian representative on the tribunal, but Russia — in the shape of Andrey Kozyrev — actively supported the creation of the tribunal and its anti-Serb thrust." He states that the UN human rights commissioner for the former Yugoslavia has pointed out inaccuracies in War Crimes Prosecutor Goldstone's charges against Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic and General Mladic. For instance, UN observers in Srebrenica recorded no violations of human rights during the capture of the city, whereas one of the charges against the Serb leaders is that 10,000

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Muslims disappeared during this period. Under these circumstances, Kuznechevskiy continues, Russia has instructed its ambassador in the Netherlands to ask the tribunal to "freeze" legal proceedings against Karadzic and Mladic. In short, Kuznechevskiy concludes, "lawlessness is being perpetrated in full view of the world community, and the main players in this drama are those who claim to be fighting hardest for the observance of human rights."

Russia: Primakov, France's de Charette Discuss Former Yugoslavia

LD1402200196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1751 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikita Yermakov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 14 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — The development of events in the former Yugoslavia was discussed today during a telephone conversation between Yevgeniy Primakov and Herve de Charette, the foreign ministers of Russia and France.

The French Foreign Ministry said that this topic was the only one that was touched on by the heads of the two countries' diplomatic departments. The content of the conversation was not disclosed.

Russia: Chernomyrdin-Juppe Commission To Increase Economic Ties

LD1402195396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — The creation of the Chernomyrdin-Juppe commission, which will hold its first meeting during the Moscow visit of the French prime minister on February 14-16, is dictated by the desire of both countries to upgrade their economic relations significantly, experts of the Europe and North America Department in the Russian Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations told INTERFAX Wednesday.

Moscow and Paris, they said, will step up cooperation in the areas of the fuel and energy industry, the sugar industry, conversion to peaceful production, transport, electronics, aircraft construction, space exploration, iron and steel and non-ferrous metallurgy and military technology.

The ministry believes that France is a leading partner of Russia in Europe. It accounts for over 3 percent of Russia's foreign trade.

The experts say that, following a reduction of the volume of trade in 1990-93, bilateral trade stabilized in 1994 and increased to $2.4 billion in 1995 when both Russian exports and purchases in France increased.

Natural gas, oil, petroleum products, coal, metals and metal products account for 70 percent of Russian exports to France. The export of nonferrous metals, chemicals, timber, pulp and paper to France increased in 1995.

Experts predict an increase of the export of aviation titanium, construction materials, nonferrous and precious metals and products made of them and certain kinds of foodstuffs to France.

The ministry experts told INTERFAX that the Russian negotiators are likely to raise the issues of lifting restrictions on the amount of textiles and ferrous and nonferrous metal products that can be exported to France, of revising the anti-dumping duties levied on numerous Russian chemicals and of changing the rules under which enriched uranium is brought to the European Union. Paris is trying to keep the import of uranium at the existing level.

Russia: Grachev on Withdrawal of Peacekeepers from Abkhazia

LD1502135896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1225 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 15 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — If in the near future the Abkhaz and Georgian sides do not find agreement on resolving the conflict, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev intends to suggest that the president and the Federation Council should withdraw the Russian peacekeeping forces from Abkhazia. The head of the Russian military department stated this today to journalists at the "Podmoskovye" military rest home, where he was participating in the work of the second congress of the Federation of Trade Unions of the Staff and Servicemen of the Russian Armed Forces.

Pavel Grachev reported that the mandate of Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia expires today, 15 February, and "he personally does not intend to extend it." The minister believes that in the present conditions when the sides cannot reach mutual agreement on the issues relating to a settlement, there is no sense in leaving the peacekeepers there. "One should not keep power there on Russian bayonets for such a long time," Pavel Grachev stressed.

Answering a question from an ITAR-TASS correspondent, the defense minister reported that on Monday he met with Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba. On Tuesday Pavel Grachev gathered the Abkhaz leader, Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze, and Georgian Ambassador to Russia Vazha Lordkipanidze at one

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table. The meeting discussed problems of settling the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict.

Pavel Grachev said that the meeting was a complex one, the opinions of the conflicting sides coincided on some problems, however, Vladislav Ardzinba was categorically against the wording "a federal state" (Georgia) and proposed replacing it with "a federal union."

The Russian defense minister believes that Ardzinba's proposal on "a federal union" cannot satisfy the Georgian side as this is the first step "toward an independent state". Pavel Grachev said that such a development of events should not be allowed, it is necessary to preserve Georgia as a single state.

Russia: Embassy Intruder Shot Dead During Disarmament Operation

LD1502063296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0302 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Zakharchenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pyongyang, 15 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — The North Korean citizen armed with a pistol who entered the building of the Russian trade representation in Pyongyang on 14 February was shot dead today during the operation to disarm him. No Russian citizens were hurt.

It was reported to the ITAR-TASS correspondent by a Russian embassy staffer, who wished to remain anonymous, that "the operation to disarm the armed defector was completed successfully as a result of close cooperation with the special services of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and with the staff of the Russian embassay." "The operation was very carefully prepared for almost 24 hours. All members of staff of the embassy and the trade representation assisted in it," the embassy spokesman said. He did not report how the defector came to be shot dead, only noting that he was shot in the head.

A shot was heard at approximately 1015 local time in the area where the trade representation is situated, but it is still not clear whether the shot was fired outside or inside the building. At that moment, the gates of the trade representation were open, somethingly like 10-15 North Korean military guards could be seen around them, including armed guards. Cars were not stopped in the adjacent streets. Only pedestrian access in the direct vicinity of the trade representation was closed for some time.

Staff of the special services were permitted to enter the territory of the trade representation since the defector "had committed serious crimes: he had killed three people and wounded one," the embassy spokesman noted. According to him, the defector had a pistol and three cartridges.

The ITAR-TASS correspondent learned from other sources that the 25-year-old defector, who was a member of the local special services, had killed fellow employees on 14 February, the day he entered the trade representation.

The elimination of the person responsible for the incident, who, according to unverified information, had the surname Cho, was undertaken in consideration of the potential threat to Russian diplomats who had contact with him in the trade representation.

The trade representation is situated in the grounds of the Russian embassy in the center of the North Korean capital.

Russia: Suicide of DPRK Intruder's to Embassy Reported

SK1502132796 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Korean 1200 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A DPRK citizen who rushed into the Russian Embassy in Pyongyang early in the morning of 14 February committed suicide as DPRK special commandos attempted to disarm him. Quoting a Russian Embassy source, ITAR-TASS reported that following a gunshot around 1015 [0115 GMT] on 15 February, they found the young Korean's body. No member of the Russian Embassy staff was injured. The Russian Embassy has not released any official statement regarding the incident.

According to reports, the young man, named Cho Myong-kil, 25, had broken into the Russian Embassy to seek political asylum. However, he killed three DPRK guards and injured another before intruding onto the Russian Embassy. The Russian Embassy staff must have also been threatened by the armed young man. Thus, both sides probably disarmed him.

A Russian Embassy representative who asked not to be identified told ITAR-TASS that the Russian Embassy, along with special DPRK commandos, prepared for the disarmament operation that day and night. The Russian Embassy accepted the DPRK special commandos because the armed young man with a rifle was regarded as a murderer.

Meanwhile, during an interview with INTERFAX held on 15 February, a ranking Russian Foreign Ministry official said Moscow views the incident that occurred at the Russian Embassy in Pyongyang on 14 February as closed.

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Russia: Diplomat Calls DPRK Intruder 'Calm and Balanced'

LD1502135296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1306 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Ivan Zakharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PYONGYANG February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — The North Korean gunman, who burst into the Russian embassy compound in Pyongyang on Wednesday to seek political asylum, was "in sound reason, calm and balanced" during talks with Russian officials, a diplomat in the embassy told TASS on Thursday.

He did not threaten Russian diplomats, but warned he would kill himself if he was not granted the asylum, the diplomat added.

In Moscow official Foreign ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin told Tass the asylum request had not been considered at all as the gunman had killed three and wounded one North Korean guard in the embassy compound.

According to unconfirmed reports, the defector was 25-year-old sergeant of the North Korea secret services, Cho Myong-kil.

He shot himself when North Korean security agents attempted to seize him.

Russia: Embassy Intruder Described as 'Mentally Sick'

LD1502084496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0832 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Aleksandr Valiyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — The North Korean gunman, who intruded the Russian embassy compound in Pyongyang seeking politcal asylum and died during an assault, was a criminal and a mentally sick man, councellor Lee of the North Korean embassy in Moscow told Tass on Thursday.

He said the defector "was under trial and awaited a severe sentence". According to the councellor, the man decided to find shelter in the Russian embassy to avoid the punishment. However, he did not say what the defector was charged with.

"The defector was mentally unbalanced, he committed a murder (of North Korean guards at the embassy) which again proves that he was abnormal and had criminal intentions", the diplomat said.

The councellor also believes that South Korean media may use the incident to spoil relations between his country and Russia.

He recalled that several South Koreans had defected to North Korea in January and claimed that the "hostile-minded" South would now "try to distract the world public attention from that fact".

An example of such actions, according to him, was "the fabricated slander of the South Korean 'Chosun Ilbo' newspaper which has recently published an article about the wife of DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il".

Russia: Karasin: Ayslum Request Not To Affect DPRK Relations

LD1502121596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1117 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Viktor Khrekov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW Feb 15 (ITAR-TASS) — Russian authorities did not consider granting political asylum to the North Korean gunman, who intruded into the Russian Embassy compound in Pyongyang on Wednesday, because he had killed several people, according to Grigory Karasin, the official foreign ministry spokesman, who expressed conviction that the incident would not affect relations with North Korea.

Karasin confirmed that the defector had requested political asylum, but said that "in talks with Russian diplomats he admitted that he had killed several people".

The gunman has reportedly killed three and wounded one North Korean security guards in the embassy compound.

"It was natural that in those circumstances there was no possibility to consider the issue of granting him a political asylum," Karasin said.

Russian diplomats tried to talk the man into surrendering, but he resolutely refused, according to the spokesman.

"In these circumstances the North Korean special services carried out an operation to neutralise the criminal who, according to our information, committed suicide", Karasin said.

The spokesman added that nobody among the Russian personnel was wounded and no damage inflicted to the compound.

"It is evident that the incident will have no effect on the bilateral relations between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea", Karasin stressed.

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Russia: Chernychev on Embassy Incident, DPRK Relations

LD1402144196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1257 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — The Russian side is doing its best "to smoothly settle" the incident in the Russian trade mission in Pyongyang, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Albert Chernyshev told INTERFAX Wednesday.

An armed citizen of North Korea entered the territory of the Russian trade mission in Pyongyang on February 14.

"Contact has been established with the intruder, and we are examining the motives which pushed him to this move."

"Simultaneously the Russian party is maintaining contacts with the North Korean authorities," Chernyshev said.

"There are now no prospects for worsening of relations between Russia and North Korea due to this incident, and we hope that this would not happen."

"It will take some time to settle the incident," he said.

Chernyshev preferred not to comment on mass media reports stating that the Korean asked to be granted political asylum. "We are clarifying this issue now."

Russia: Government To Increase Defense Supplies to Iran

LD1402194796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Moscow will increase defense supplies to Iran to $4 billion if financial conditions prove favorable, a source in the government told INTERFAX on Wednesday.

The source noted that such supplies make up the bulk of Russia's sales to Iran, "exceed 85 percent of the total amount of supplies to Tehran and tend to grow."

In 1994, Russia sold Iran $104 million worth of military hardware and arms and $333 million worth of equipment and services.

"At the end of last year, official Tehran expressed its readiness to increase purchases of hardware, equipment and special products to $1 billion within the next one to two years," the source said.

Iran also confirmed that it "considers Russia as a major and most reliable partner."

"Tehran expressed great interest in expanding cooperation with Russia in power engineering, including nuclear power engineering, in building hydrotechnical and metallurgical facilities and in modernizing old enterprises," the source said.

It said that Moscow and Tehran have signed a number of large contracts to build facilities in Iran. Russia will have a 82 percent stake in these contracts valued at about $2 billion.

In particular, the Russian association Zarubezhatomenergostroi will finish the construction of a nuclear power plant in Bushehr estimated at $780 million and help build another nuclear power station in southern Iran.

Experts attribute the decline in Russian-Iranian trade in the last few years to the problem of unsettled payments. The problem was resolved in December 1995 during a trip to Iran by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Davydov.

Under a protocol signed during the visit, Iran has to pay off its debt to Russia with oil supplies to an amount of $230 million and provide $150 million in cash.

Analysts believe that if Iran complies with its obligations under the contracts and pays off its debt for defense supplies valued at $380 million, Russian exports to Iran may increase to $4.5 billion-$5 billion by the year 2005.

Russia: Foreign Ministry Official Welcomes Iraqi Statement

LD1402224396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1530 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 14 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — The statement made in the UN Security Council on Tuesday [13 February] by the head of the Iraqi delegation that Baghdad is prepared to implement unconditionally the Security Council resolution on the partial lifting of the embargo on supplies of Iraqi oil "will considerably improve the extremely difficult humanitarian situation in the country and will strengthen Iraq's overall cooperation with the United Nations." This opinion was expressed today in a conversation with an ITAR-TASS correspondent by Sergey Kirpichenko, first deputy director of the department of the Near East and North Africa of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation. He recalled that the UN document permits Iraq to supply oil and oil products to a value of $2 billion in exchange for imports of foodstuffs and medicines for the Iraqi population.

The Russian side has constantly advised Baghdad to take such a step and notes with satisfaction its positive

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decision on this issue, the diplomat said. "The talks to work out a mechanism for implementing this document are in the initial stage," S. Kirpichenko noted. "Nonetheless, the positive step in the right direction bears witness to Iraq's willingness to arrange effective cooperation with the United Nations."

It must be noted, he continued, that Baghdad's agreement to fulfill this Security Council resolution is not directly connected with the question of completely lifting the sanctions against Iraq. This depends on Iraq's attitude to implementing another resolution demanding "the closure of all disarmament dossiers."

S. Kirpichenko described as "unjustified and baseless" Iraq's fears that the UN Security Council resolution on the partial lifting of the embargo on supplies of Iraqi oil in accordance with the formula "oil for food" could be a substitute for a future decision on the total lifting of sanctions against that country. "It is good that Iraq has understood this. The UN Security Council has always been serious about fulfilling its own decisions," the Russian diplomat said.

Russia: Ministry Denies Signing $10 Billion Iraqi Oil Contract

LD1402163896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1429 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (PIA-INTERFAX) — The Russian Ministry of Fuel and Energy has denied any involvement in the signing of a multi-billion oil contract with Iraq last week.

Adviser to the minister of fuel and energy for foreign economic relations Aleksandr Voronin told INTERFAX on Wednesday that media reports about the signing of a $10 billion contract "are most likely misinformation."

"The signing of any agreement on cooperation in the oil industry to an amount of $10 billion is, to put it mildly, unlikely without the participation of the Ministry of Fuel and Energy," he said.

Earlier, foreign news reports quoted Iraqi News Agency as saying that last Wednesday Russian and Iraqi officials had signed an agreement to restore the Iraqi oil industry and increase annual oil production to 60.8 million tonnes (1 million barrels a day).

The reports indicated that the agreement had been signed by Deputy Iraqi Oil Minister Fayez A. Shahin and a Russian "official delegation" whose make-up was not specified.

A representative of Russia's Zarubezhneft association, the official operator of all Russian oil projects in Iraq, also denied that his company had been involved in the preparation or signing of the agreement.

He said the company management is inclined to consider these reports as misinformation.

As has been reported earlier, the next round of talks — following the lifting of U.N. sanctions — on the implementation of the second stage of the program to develop Iraq's largest oil field in Western Kurna is not expected to begin before March.

Zarubezhneft and the Mashinoimport association each have a 15 percent stake in the project, while LUkoil, Russia's largest oil company, holds a 70 percent package.

According to various estimates, the value of the project ranges from $2 billion to $7 billion.

Russia: U.S. Flexing 'Muscles' Toward PRC Seen Election-Related

MM1502112396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Nadein: "Bill Clinton Decides To Sort Things Out With the Communists — This Time the Chinese Communists"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—This week Washington is faced with the task of convincing the PRC of the need to behave properly. "The United States will be obliged to intervene to protect Taiwan," one analyst at the U.S. Defense Department said. "And this has little to do with democracy or free markets. If we do not do this, then all the faith in the forward-based response forces in the western Pacific will disappear, that's all."

But that is not all. That is to say, democracy and the development of market principles are really neither here nor there in this case. Four years ago, it was easy for Clinton the contender to accuse President George Bush of pandering to tyranny, with China primarily in mind. Today, when reciprocal trade between the two countries exceeds $100 billion, while Chinese orders provide work for 30,000 Americans, severing ties would be a very painful business for them.

All America knows how President Clinton loathes quick decisions. But the facts of the case, which, it is claimed in the United States, have been deliberately engineered by Beijing, could force Clinton to resort to urgent measures.

Three things are forcing Washington to consider retaliation. The first is directly related to money. The Chinese Government has promised to use force and to close several powerful factories. These enterprises illegally copy

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American diskettes and compact disks containing computer programs and games. As the quality of these pirate copies is high and the price markedly lower than the originals, they are readily bought up in Europe and particularly in Asia.

The Americans estimate the damage suffered by them runs into hundreds of millions of dollars.

The second factor is associated with the supply of equipment to Pakistan which, in the American intelligence service's opinion, could be used in the production of nuclear weapons. There has been a great deal of fuss here. If there is sufficient truth in it, the president must, under U.S. laws, sever all cooperation with such a state. In particular, the president must halt the current $10-billion loan which underwrites American deals in China. This will essentially mean the end of cooperation.

Finally, Washington is alarmed by the news of PRC maneuvers in the immediate vicinity of Taiwan. The Pentagon is convinced that a country which obtains major credit cannot carry out a large-scale assault operation involving 400,000 soldiers. China is demonstrating by these maneuvers its high level of readiness, and consequently does not need financial aid.

The White House could be prompted to take decisive action not only by the Chinese Communists' "machinations" but by their own political skirmishing. In election year the president has to look more resolute, otherwise his own people, rather than the opposition, will be after him. According to the writers of a NEWSWEEK article, the Pentagon has warned China through unofficial channels that this issue is explosive. To which the Chinese response through those same lines of communication has been a grand silence.

This can be interpreted variously. It can be interpreted as meaning that we will tolerate no interference in our internal affairs or, alternatively, that we do not intend to attack Taiwan and therefore threats against us are misplaced.

Although election concerns do generate excessive pugnacity, the chances of a peaceful resolution of the conflict remain greater. China values the billions of dollars which it sorely lacks to plug a host of yawning gaps. America is also reluctant to fight. Simply flexing your muscles is far more beneficial.

Russia: Removal of Ukraine Chief of Staff Lopata Viewed

MM1402134296 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Grigoriy Nesmyanovich: "Ukrainian Armed Forces General Staff Left Without Chief"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The distinct antagonism that has been observed between Ukrainian Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov and Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata, chief of the General Staff, and the lack of coordination in their joint work has culminated in the latter's removal from his post in connection with his transfer to other work.

Literally on the first day he took up the highest staff post the general stated his desire to limit the functions of the ministry and General Staff apparatuses. The conflict between the high-ranking officials is a logical continuation of the parallel process involving the cutting of the Army and the selling off of its weapons, the sharp reduction in budget appropriations for the military's needs, and the abolition of privileges which once set people in uniform apart. There are reports that the Presidential Staff already has a draft edict according to which all servicemen will be stripped of privileges. In addition, income tax will be introduced for them.

Russia: Accord Signed on EU Finance for Judicial Reform

LD1402194696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1804 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Andrey Yarushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PARIS, February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — Secretary-General of the Council of Europe Daniel Tarschys and European Commission member Hans van den Broek signed an agreement in Strasbourg on Wednesday [14 February] to provide 1.2 million ECU for strengthening Russia's federal power, creating human rights mechanisms and carrying out judicial reform.

Russia, which will become a full-fledged member of the European Union [as received] in late February, is pressing ahead with a reform of its legal institutions, which is a condition of its membership in the Council of Europe.

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Russia: Primakov, Slovakia's Sestak Meet on Security Issues

LD1402212296 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1700 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After a three-year break in contact between the foreign ministers of Russia and Slovakia, Jozef Sestak, state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, was received today in the Russian Foreign Ministry building at Smolenskaya Square in Moscow. Our Moscow correspondent Maria Mikusova has phoned us with more details:

[Mikusova] The state secretary at the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is in Moscow on a working visit, met today with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov; Dmitriy Ryurikov, presidential advisor on foreign policy issues; and Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the Russian Duma committee for international affairs.

The talks, during which they analysed the current international political situation, focused on issues of creating a new structure of European security and the tasks of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The two sides said bilateral relations were balanced. State Secretary Jozef Sestak told Radiozurnal [Slovak radio program] the following on this issue:

[Begin recording] [Sestak] I was very pleased when we were thanked, especially by the Russian State Duma, for the National Council of Slovakia's support in the process of the Russian Federation's admission into the Council of Europe.

[Unidentified correspondent] State Secretary, you said that you assessed with your partners topical issues of international policy. I suppose you also talked about the issue of NATO's enlargement. Have there been any new developments?

[Sestak] The fact is, and I can confirm it from our contacts as well as our meeting in Davos at the World Economic Forum, that concerning the creation of a new European security structure, one has to consider the security interests of Russia. A new European security structure can only be effective and viable if Russia is part of it. This is an acknowledged fact.

[Correspondent] However, with the arrival of Primakov to the post of foreign minister, Russians have toughened their policy. There is talk in NATO circles that only those European countries who have good relations with Russia will be admitted to NATO. Where does the Slovak Republic stand on this at the moment?

[Sestak] Slovakia's position on this issue is exactly the same as contained in our government manifesto and in all our foreign political orientations. It remains to be one of our priorities.

Concerning the tough rhetoric, I would not give it too much importance. Certain countries are facing elections and election campaigns usually bring with it certain rhetoric with, one might call, a tough tone. I think that this rhetoric represents the basic positions of individual parties and that, to put it simply, parties must look for solutions.

[Correspondent] Can we finally expect that the Russian foreign minister will soon come for an official visit to Slovakia?

[Sestak] Minister Primakov has accepted our invitation to come to Slovakia with pleasure. The date [of his visit] will be agreed upon through diplomatic channels. [end recording]

Russia: Russian-Polish Roundtable Discusses NATO Enlargement

MM1402141596 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Mikhail Tretyakov: "NATO the Bone of Contention"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Warsaw — How can Russian-Polish relations be improved, and how can points of contact be found on the question of Poland's entry to NATO? These and other complex problems in bilateral cooperation were examined by political scientists and politicians of the neighbor countries at the first session of a Russian-Polish roundtable held in Warsaw.

Opening the meeting, Polish Foreign Minster Dariusz Rosati stressed that Warsaw's major foreign policy priority after 1989 is joining NATO and European economic organizations. At the same time, he said that Poland supports good-neighborly relations with Russia.

The speaker noted that this session opened a broad Polish-Russian discussion, in which the main role should be played by the two countries' intellectual and political elites. In his opinion, this conversation is necessary in order to eliminate the historically conditioned prejudices and stereotypes that exist on both sides.

Unfortunately, the subsequent work of the roundtable took place behind closed doors, so that the results achieved by its participants can be known only from the short press conference. From the answer to your correspondent's question: Was any rapprochement achieved in connection with NATO's eastward expansion, it is possible to conclude that this did not happen, and the sides stuck to their opinions. So that this question remains a sort of bone of contention in bilateral relations.

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Professor Oleg Bogomolov, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, believes that opinions suggesting a moderation of views on this problem can be noted among the participants in the roundtable. In his words, NATO should be transformed from a defensive union designed for deterrence, into an organization for maintaining peace in Europe and eliminating conflicts in that region. Such steps would help to bring our views closer together on this problem, he noted.

In the opinion of Bronislaw Geremek, leader of the Sejm Commission on International Affairs, Warsaw is confident that Poland's joining NATO does not contradict Russia's interests.

And although the main issue at the roundtable remains opens, its participants noted the usefulness of such meetings.

True, bewilderment was expressed in connection with the fact that representatives of the largest faction in the State Duma, the CPRF, the winner at the recent elections, did not take part in its work. No one here could answer what caused this or why they did not come to Warsaw.

Russia: Swedish Foreign Minister For Expanding Ties With Russia

LD1402203996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1844 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Nikolay Vukolov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stockholm, February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — The Swedish Governmer proceeds from the fact that Russia's movement in the direction of further reforms and close interaction with European structures continues, Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen stated at the Riksdag meeting today. She read out the government's declaration at the opening of debates on the country's foreign policy.

Sweden is pursuing a consistent political course with respect to Russia. We are seeking to expand cooperation both at the regional level, within the framework of the Council of the States of the Baltic Sea and the Council of the Barents-European Arctic region, and on a wider international scale, the Swedish foreign minister pointed out.

The further development of the situation in Russia has a great importance not only for Sweden but also for Europe and the entire international community as a whole. In the last few years parliaments of two convocations were democratically elected in Russia which can be considered as an essential success, the Swedish top diplomat stressed.

Russia is now at such a stage when the policy of reforms is being called into question from different sides. It is inevitable that the process of Russian reforms will take a long time, the minister said.

At the same time Lena Hjelm-Wallen accentuated that the "waging of war in Chechnya by Russia is unacceptable" and called for a political settlement of this conflict.

Speaking on the foreign political line of Sweden, the head of the Foreign Ministry emphasised that the Swedish course for freedom from military alliances pursuing the aim of preserving neutrality in the event of war in neighbouring countries, remains unwavering.

From Sweden's viewpoint, it is necessary to avoid new lines of the division in Europe, Lena Hjelm-Wallen emphasised.

Russia: Special Services Actions in Germany Viewed

964F1044A Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No 4, 28 Jan-4 Feb 96 p 14

[Article by Yuriy Shpakov: "Intelligence Officers Are Not Slumbering, or New Games After the Cold War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Germany is concerned at the operations of Russian intelligence officers. The German Office for Protection of the Constitution (counterintelligence) is noting changes in the activity of Russian agents and intelligence operatives on German territory. This is what Yuriy Shpakov, MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI's correspondent in Berlin, has managed to find out in this connection.

German counterintelligence believes that Russia attaches particular significance to the procurement of information via the channels of seven special services, whose employees constitute a six-figure number. The reference is to the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Federal Government Communications and Information Agency (FAPSI), the Federal Border Service (FPS), the Main Protection Directorate (GUO), and the Presidential Security Service (SBP).

MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI Files

Agents who have not yet been exposed, particularly those connected with the former Main Intelligence Directorate of the GDR Ministry of State Security, have been hired by other intelligence services and are once again being used against the FRG. Thus right up until it was broken up the Main Intelligence

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Directorate cooperated closely with the Soviet special services and handed over to them a large volume of documents and information. This information and clandestine employees of the GDR Ministry of State Security are today being used by Russia's intelligence services.

Cheaper To Steal Than To Make

Russia's political leadership is very interested in obtaining via the intelligence services details of the mechanism of the functioning of free competition and processes in the economy of the West's industrially developed countries. Economic espionage is geared to an improvement in Russia's economic position. For this reason it is for Russia's special services a government commission at the level of a law. President of Russia Boris Yeltsin has stressed repeatedly at closed meetings that foreign intelligence could make an important contribution to Russia's economic security. In this connection German counterintelligence officers are noting numerous attempts to obtain entry visas to Germany by persons detected previously in intelligence activity.

Priority for Economic Espionage

The German special services note that there is a special department directly in the SVR responsible for intelligence activities in the economic sphere. Its officers abroad work, specifically, under the cover of official Russian offices and also Russian banks and trade missions or firms. Strong base points have been formed to observe foreign competitive enterprises and to obtain information. It is significant that information that has been obtained is transmitted, after it has been processed and analyzed, not only to the leaders of the state but also to commercial firms working in the interests or under the cover of high state officials.

The FSB also has a separate subdivision, whose assignments include mainly economic counterintelligence. Its activity is designed to support the interests of Russian enterprises and to protect them in international economic cooperation. In this connection the FSB procures information on price strategy on the world market and the results of the activity of competing firms and also data on research and its results at foreign enterprises. In addition, the former security officers actively study foreign entrepreneurs and try to establish firm contacts with them.

Russia's special services use for this purpose whole firms and joint ventures.

German counterintelligence has noted that the spheres of activity of various Russian special services in Germany are not always clearly demarcated and that overlapping in their activity is observed. Significantly increased activity of the GRU in the specific "science and technology" field is noticed, for example. The military intelligence officers are endeavoring to wrest the initiative from the SVR. According to some information, "competitors" have even been exposed to the German special services.

One gets the impression that military intelligence is going increasingly commercial and is oriented mainly toward the collection of information which it may subsequently be profitable to sell to commercial outfits. Independent experts link this with the high level of corruption in the top command staff of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense.

Methods of Russia's Special Services

New trends have emerged in the methods of Russia's special services. The secret procurement of information is being transferred to a network of agents, which is radio-controlled directly from Russia. This, specifically, applies to undercover officers who have been sent into Germany as emigres, immigrants, and refugees. In this case large recruitment expenses are avoided and there is no need for the elaborate concealment of such agents in Germany.

The withdrawal of the Russian troops, whose garrisons were used as base points, and the transfer of control of the agents to the Russian intelligence service centers in Moscow have influenced mainly the system of work with agents. Radio communications and so-called "dead drops" or (when written communications are exchanged) cryptographic methods are employed increasingly for communication with the agents.

German counterintelligence officers cite as an example an instance of the activity of FAPSI secret agents in a department of the Russian Embassy in Berlin. The FAPSI purchased the high-tech communications electronics at a German enterprise. Lieutenant General Starovoytov, leader of the FAPSI, personally visited prominent firms of the electronics branches in southern Germany.

Russia, the annual report of the Office for Protection of the Constitution observes, maintains, as before, in official missions in Germany—in the embassy in Bonn, for example, and its offices in Berlin—a considerable number of intelligence base points, so-called legal intelligence operatives. The SVR and the GRU have considerably more officers here than in other European countries.

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The Chief Who Knows Nothing

The federal chancellor himself has recently been permitting himself to poke fun publicly at German intelligence. "If I say something now, and this is published, this will, I hope, be read in Pullach (BND Headquarters). About a week later I will receive from there confidential information, the main substance of which will be my estimates," Helmut Kohl said. He was hinting that German intelligence officers compile two-thirds of their estimates from news media material.

Even German experts are forced to acknowledge that the weakest spot in the BND are its top echelon and Konrad Porsner, president of the special service, personally.

Germans were able to satisfy themselves of this yet again on 19 January, when the country's chief intelligence officer appeared as a witness at a session of the special commission looking into the "plutonium fraud" scandal.

Bundestag members were not so much astonished as amused by Porsner's responses of the type: "Knowledge of each document is not a part of my official duties" or "A competent adviser could definitely tell you about this." The crown of the head of the special service's dialogue with the deputies was his candid confession: "As a rule, the head of the BND knows absolutely nothing about current operations." A chief who knows nothing is not looked upon with all that much favor by his transatlantic CIA colleagues either. Last summer, when Porsner was planning a trip to the United States, chiefs of the American special service could not "find time" to meet with him, which they communicated in advance, and the BND chief abandoned his U.S. visit.

Experts note that the BND has for a long time been bound up in its own internal intrigues. Civilian employees are in conflict with the military officers, the procurers of information, with the support personnel, and all together, with the hapless, as they believe, information evaluation service. Nor does Porsner remain aloof from these "shootouts." He has for a long time, for example, simply not been on speaking terms with his deputy Gerhard Guellich, who is considered an experienced intelligence officer.

Spheres of Interest

Porsner lamented at a session of the Bundestag commission: "What is not kept secret, but should be, is having a negative effect on BND activity." It is hard not to agree with the BND president: Mountains of books and newspaper articles, which contain a comprehensive analysis of its activity, have been written about German intelligence. For example, German intelligence's main adversaries may be computed per a world map hanging in headquarters in Pullach. The targets of German espionage are identified on it in different colors. Orange areas are the most important for the German intelligence officers. The territories of the republics of the former USSR remain such. Green and lilac are crisis regions in North Africa and "Black Africa."

Generally, though, the whole world is the center of interest of the BND: Secret agents and operatives in more than 100 countries are concerned by the hour with obtaining information. More often than not, they are disguised as embassy staffers and have their own address under the cover of "second political officer." Approximately 1,000 "cruising monitors" comb the airwaves around the clock and transcribe telephone and radio conversations and telex and fax traffic.

MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI Files

The BND is composed of 6,000 employees, half of whom are civilians working on contract, one-third permanent civil servants, and one out of every 10 is a serviceman. The special service costs the German taxpayer DM700 million a year, and a substantial part of the funds goes on employee pay—almost half a million marks. A rough calculation testifies that the employee's monthly wage is more than DM8,000. For Germany these are very good earnings.

The coming reduction in the intelligence structures in connection with the end of the cold war is causing concern among the employees. A document recently adopted at the federal level says that a "removal of the fat" is coming in German intelligence. This is what German government officials call the traditional personnel reductions in the managerial machinery and budget-cutting here. As a BND employee observed, the staff of the intelligence department has become virtually paralyzed because of this.

German Special Services in the Mirror of Opinions

"Were you to be approached by the Office for Protection of the Constitution, and it was suggested that you cooperate with it from time to time for money, would you agree?"

Ten percent of Germans polled answered this question in the affirmative. Sixteen percent allow of such a possibility, and 71 percent responded with a categorical "no" (the rest gave no answer). It is interesting to look at the party affiliation of the potential assistants of the German special services: 11 percent of them are composed of members of the CDU/CSU, 11 percent, of the SPD, 19 percent, of the FDP, 5 percent, of the Alliance 90/Greens, and 1 percent, of the DSP, and 58 percent, of the Republicans (far-right nationalists).

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However, despite the fact that the vast majority have no intention of becoming amateur informers, this office's approval rating in Germany is quite high: 73 percent of respondents consider its activity "essential," and only 20 percent, "superfluous."

The BND (Federal Intelligence Service) is also rated quite highly by the public: 69 percent of Germans polled called it "essential," and 23 percent declared that it is unnecessary.

Germans are unhappy here at the low level of supervision of the special services on the part of parliament: 36 percent responded that it is "adequate," 45 percent, "inadequate," and 19 percent did not respond.

West Germans take a more critical view of the special services than East Germans: 48 percent of "Wessis" and only 36 percent of "Ossis" advocated an increase in supervision of the activity of the German special services.

MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI Files

The counterintelligence informer-agent does not cost the German taxpayer all that much on average. One 45-year-old resident of Bremen, for example, produced for the Office for Protection of the Constitution monthly for DM1,000 information from the inmost recesses of the German Communist Party (it existed in West Germany, as we know, on money from the GDR). When the "worker-peasant republic" and, together with it, the German Communist Party ceased to exist, the non-T/O agent who was left without work received from the office DM24,000 in severance benefit—two years' "pay" to ensure that he keep the secret as regards his clandestine business.

There have been many oddities in the history of German intelligence. In 1985, when counterintelligence chief Hans-Joachim Tiegde suddenly went over to the GDR, it was necessary for the Western and Eastern intelligence services to "switch off" the double agent Joachim Meuthsheim. The latter had been insinuated by the GDR into the inmost recesses of the FRG Office for Protection of the Constitution, but had been "turned" by the West Germans for their use. To ensure that Meuthsheim end his work and keep his mouth shut he received monthly DM2,000 from his new Western masters and DM1,000 from his Eastern masters.

The remarks of independent experts, who believe that, faced with the threat of the loss of their jobs, Western and Eastern intelligence officers are beginning to intimidate their countries' leaders with one another and even to play up to one another in this respect, are significant.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Officially Announces Decision To Run

LD1502112096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1110 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Yekaterinburg, 15 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — Boris Yeltsin today officially announced his decision to run for the post of Russian president for a second term. He made it in his speech at a meeting with the public at the Youth Palace in Yekaterinburg.

Russia: Yeltsin's Yekaterinburg Address Summarized

LD1502125196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1236 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEKATERINBURG February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — President Boris Yeltsin announced on Thursday that he would run for the second term of office at presidential elections on June 16 because he sees no other potential candidate who could continue reforms in the country.

Yeltsin told a meeting of top officials in his home town of Yekaterinburg in the Urals, that having analysed the situation in the country and acquainted himself with the list of contenders to the presidential post, "I have come to the conclusion that, in order to ensure the continuation of the course of reforms, it is necessary for me to stand for president at elections".

Summing up the results of his rule in the past five years, Yeltsin said the Russian economy had "radically changed and the transformations, which began in conditions of the collapse of the old state and the construction of a new one, are progressing and yielding considerable fruit".

The president admitted that he had made mistakes in implementing reforms, but stressed that the results of transformations were evident.

He stressed that mass media became free and a new system of the political structure has been formed.

The main problem for Yeltsin is the conflict in Chechnya, which, he said, should be over as soon as possible.

Yeltsin turned down extreme solutions to the conflict. He said both unconditional and immediate troops withdrawal and the "scorched earth tactics" were unacceptable.

Speaking on the financial policy, Yeltsin pledged to adhere to a tough policy and refrain from money printing to page back wages and pensions. "I give my word that we shall not print a single 'wooden' rouble", he said using the Russian definition for the devaluated national currency.

Russia: Analyst Notes Yeltsin's Electoral Strategy

MK1402102696 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 13 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Marina Kalashnikova on interview with Emil Pain, deputy chief of the Russian president's Analytical Administration: "Kremlin Whales Think It Is Too Early To Throw Themselves Onto the Shore"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Emil Pain, deputy chief of the Russian president's Analytical Administration, thinks that Boris Yeltsin should be elected for another term if only because he has allowed the election to take place. Last Friday [9 February] Pain was appointed for yet another post: to head a commission on the settlement in Chechnya. Meanwhile, a similar commission under Viktor Chernomyrdin already exists. Yet, the presidential staff appears to be in need of one of its own. Your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent went to visit Emil Pain to find out how the party of power is hoping to get its candidate reelected and how regional and ethnic problems, on which Mr. Pain is considered to be an authoritative expert, will be reflected in the election campaign.

A Secret Mission of the Regions

Organizational measures have already been taken. In late January, Nikolay Yegorov, chief of the presidential staff, prescribed Boris Yeltsin a formidable analytical service that would "seriously come to grips with political planning." It seems that the current analytical service, without waiting for the ongoing reorganization at the Programs Analysis Administration to end, has already started functioning as a political headquarters of sorts. Obviously, serious work entails serious protection. At both gates of Entrance No. 6 at Ipatyevskiy Pereulok, through which your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent passed, I was treated politely, but watchfully. At one checkpoint the guards noted that my face was different from that on the photo in my passport. At the other, they suggested without a trace of a smile that I give up "a disassembled grenade launcher" after their metal detector reacted to my keys and a tape recorder in my handbag. So, all approaches to the electoral strategy — whether already devised or still to be drawn up — are carefully guarded. For this reason, my conversation with Mr. Pain makes it possible to judge only about certain elements of this strategy.

Yet, some points are beyond any doubt. In the view of the presidential analyst, neither the sovereignty of

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republics nor the autonomy of regions will be an issue between the Communists and the democrats. The election campaign will concentrate on crucial matters, such as "Who is responsible for the fact that the economy is in shambles?" or "How can the state be made strong again?" According to Pain, the presidential message, which is, evidently, not by chance being prepared for 23 February [Day of the Russian Army], will for the fist time "have no division into various sections on the economy, regions, and the nationalities question. It is conceived as a comprehensive picture, as the image of a political situation."

Nonetheless, the impression is that the regions can play a fairly intricate role in the effort to redivide the voters in the election. The enemy's votes can only be won over in the regions. Who can play in the central government's orchestra and on what terms? This is something on which the current regime's prospects depend. In this regard, how is this problem interpreted in the presidential staff?

In Mr. Pain's view, the scheme of the upcoming election is simple. "Potentially, only two forces stand a chance: the Communists and the party of power. The latter has the sole candidate, Yeltsin." Before deciding who of the possible candidates can cope with his region's problems, the Russian voter should look up from his regional plot of land and think about something else, namely: Who will heed his view in the future. Mr. Pain conceded that the "electorate will have to be won over, not by economic measures, but first of all by explaining to the people that they in fact have no choice. People who no longer want party committees, state planning committees, state supply committees have no other choice but to back the incumbent president. Most importantly, people should understand that while this government gives them the right of choice, the other will leave them no choice at all. I would vote for Yeltsin if only because he has allowed the election to take place." This makes more understandable Mr. Pain's thesis that in the election campaign one should "proceed from the political forces that can back the president, not from the regions."

This thesis is arguable, however. At least one of the presidential electoral policy's "secrets" is connected precisely with regions. Mr. Pain describes the dynamics of Russian regionalism in approximately the following way. At first, the former party leaders of the autonomous republics (or union republics for that matter) planned to exploit the energy of nationalist movements for the purpose of self-preservation. But some time later it turned out that they had no "democratic opposition" and that the sole actual threat facing them was precisely the nationalist movement. Then a parade of pointed loyalty came to replace the "parade of sovereignties." It became more profitable to be on friendly terms with Moscow than to antagonize it. The center guarantees protection from the nationalist opposition. The center subsidizes many ethnic regions, enabling them to avoid "social overheating." For this reason, it is logical that now, apart from the Dudayev group, there is essentially no separatist force that could prove the fruitfulness of the idea of independent existence anywhere in Russia.

Local elections held last year and early this year have revealed a manifest trend: Regional leaders have already "taken everything under their control" and their situation is stable. They know very well what can be expected from the current president. Yet, there is an objective threat that, on returning to power, the Communists will wish to appoint their men to the provinces by using "a new broom," to break the structure of existing relations and to once again get down to a redivision of local property. For this reason, Mr. Pain is absolutely certain that "none of the current regional leaders is interested in changing the regime. Under new authorities, a drastically new paradigm may emerge."

Chechnya Is Not a Proper Example by Which To Judge on Nationalities Policy

There is a widespread view that Chechnya will be the president's stumbling block in his election campaign — it is by it that his overall nationalities policy will be judged. Yet, Mr. Pain suggests that we give up stereotypes in this regard as well. In his view, had this policy not been sufficiently flexible over the past several years, there could well have been other conflicts besides the Chechen one. In 1991 and in early 1992, the forecasts were most pessimistic: Many predicted that Russia, following in the USSR's footsteps, would break up "into atoms." Maps were printed in which from 150 to 200 locations of possible armed conflicts in Russia were marked. In 1991, the Dudayevites seized the building of the Chechen Supreme Soviet. The same scenario could have repeated itself in Kabarda in the fall of 1992. At the very beginning of the 1990's the panic-stricken West was gearing up for the absorption of millions of Russian refugees (yet, it would be more accurate to say that it was bracing itself against them), whereas some people in Russia urged to be ready to accept as many as 25 million Russian-speaking refugees from the near abroad. Nothing of the kind has occurred, Pain stressed. Many potential conflicts could be extinguished. Successes came when the government gave up the policy of headlong attacks on long-festering problems of ethnic relations. In the presidential analyst's opinion, Yeltsin's nationalities policy has been flexible

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enough, because "the crux of his nationalities policy has been the principle of self-regulation."

Mr. Pain is certain that the nationalities card will not be played in the 1996 presidential election. According to polls, only 2-4 percent of the population support nationalist slogans. Xenophobia has an infinitely small share in public conscience compared to the fears of the mafia, economic uncertainty, and so forth. In the December parliamentary elections, all the blocs that attempted to overtly make use of nationalist slogans either suffered a defeat, as the Congress of Russian Communities, or lost a considerable number of votes, as the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia. Therefore, in Mr. Pain's view, the transition period nationalities policy has put in place a safety mechanism that can save society from yet another round of ethnic separatism. You can expect interethnic conflicts inside Federation components, but no longer a confrontation between them and Moscow. Tensions may break out among, let us say, ethnic groups that lost or won in the fight for privatization. They are potentially susceptible to manipulation and provocation that might lead to a conflict.

Chechnya remains the last remnant of the "old zone of conflicts." No new ones have emerged since 1993. "Chechnya is not an island. If the 'parade of sovereignties' has been succeeded by a period of nomenklatura loyalty elsewhere, all these conditions are also bound to prevail in Chechnya, Pain thinks. When the revolutionary enthusiasm of national democratic movements swept Chechnya, there was nothing original about it. It only followed a universal trend, even if belatedly. But just as the communist scenario of catastrophe has been shattered by life, so will be the "democratic" one, particularly in Chechnya. The idea that all the Chechen people to a man want independence runs counter to human nature. Most interestingly, this argument is defended by economists, who would be better advised to give thought to the general logic of human life, to the fact that people can get weary and that peace and peaceful life are now more important for an overwhelming majority of people than an abstract national idea."

Speaking about ways of resolving the Chechen crisis, the head of the new commission on Chechnya emphasized that "the Kremlin could bring troops there alone, but it cannot end the war unilaterally. There are many players, the federal troops being far from the most active of them over the past six months." Thus, the impression is that even on this sensitive issue Mr. Pain thinks it appropriate to continue to stick to the principle of self-regulation in the provinces, an approach that has proven to be justified, and give up excessive outside pressure or "false and harmful ideas," such as signature-raising campaigns. "A campaign for the abolition of hurricanes and typhoons would be less foolish and would result in fewer negative consequences than the campaign for the end of the war. It would have been appropriate had both sides been ready to compromise. Why does Dudayev need to make concessions if Russian public promises him everything anyway?"

Whatever Yeltsin's seven plans for ending the crisis might contain, presumably they do not foresee the struggle with a "third force" or "a coup plot" in the center, for Mr. Pain does not believe in such a game. "If there is an anonymous third force, then, according to the laws of the genre, there must be a fourth one. When high-level people cannot even under torture give a single name or a single characteristic of the third force that is so influential that it let Raduyev pass through all the rounds (of encirclement — KOMMERSANT-DAILY), I stop trusting these people. Suggestions can be made by journalists or analysts, but a politician must proceed from facts."

Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Are Different Things

The results of State Duma elections are revealing. In 37 regions the Communists won in both federal and single-seat constituencies, that is, a stiff opposition to the current authorities is clear for all to see. A total of 41 regions where votes turned out to be more dispersed can be called less opposition-minded. Only 11 regions gave a more or less explicit backing to reform by electing to parliament representatives of "Russia Is Our Home" [NDR] or "Yabloko" in both types of districts. The leftward swing was more pronounced in ethnic republics than in oblasts — the former are greater traditionalists in terms of their political culture. In addition, they perceive the Communists as an international force to counter local nationalists. Mr. Pain is certain, however, that the State Duma elections cannot be seen as a model for the presidential election. In his words, "no republican leader hit the campaign trail to canvass for the NDR in towns and villages of his republic. No one is taking the State Duma seriously. Whether it will be more or less critical, whether or not Marychev will sport women's clothes — and the Communists, red pants — is unimportant. When necessary, they can control their electorates more effectively. They ensured complete loyalty in local elections. I have data on the number of lawsuits brought in connection with local elections in republics. Then the regional leaders had something for which to teeter on the brink of criminal action in order to place their men there."

Therefore, there is a view in the president's analytical services that Yeltsin still has untapped reserves of

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support on the ground, and considerable ones at that. Elaborating on this thesis, we can also add that, in the absence of a system of mature and well-structured parties, the center's consolidation with regional elites might be an original move. Precisely this approach currently appears to have been adopted by the Kremlin. It seems that Yeltsin wants to delegate to regional leaders the authority to mobilize the local electorate. They do have leverage to do so. An analytical report drawn up for the presidential staff asserts that "the top persons in the regions can bend the results of any elections on their territories within the range of up to 15 percent." Regional elites have clear incentives for so doing. The ousting of this regime poses a threat of losing power, instability, a redistribution of property, and a new tide of ethnic conflicts.

In addition, Mr. Pain thinks that the parliamentary elections have demonstrated the absence of a communist ideology per se in Russia. There is only "a nostalgia for the past and a protest against the presidential policy, that has often been misunderstood." It would be advisable to make it clear to the voters, who have already become used to the novelties that the period of reform has brought about, that "there is a direct link between the absence of sausages and the can of a state which the USSR was, where a trip to Bulgaria was seen as a miracle. Vodka lines, in which people had to stand for hours, coexisted with political censorship. So everything is set to be restored as a whole, indivisibly." Furthermore, we live in an urbanized country, while large cities have become a mainstay of reform. Potentially, the president's regional support base may be large enough "unless it is torn apart by parties that trample about on the same field."

Emil Pain is still "sincerely" unaware of how relations between the center and specific regions will evolve during the election campaign. He asserts that the general strategy in this regard has yet to be drawn up. But the outlines of this strategy are already discernible behind the personnel changes in the government, the presidential entourage, and among heads of local administration that followed the State Duma elections. In this regard the Duma elections, despite what Mr. Pain says, partly serve as a model of the presidential election. The aforementioned analytical report recommends that serious changes among presidential representatives in the provinces be made, work with mayors of large and medium-sized cities be stepped up, the governor corps be reinforced, no gubernatorial elections be allowed in the most opposition-minded Federation components, cooperation between the Central Electoral Commission and regional electoral commissions be fostered, financial assistance to regional and local opposition publications be drastically reduced, and so forth.

As for KOMMERSANT-DAILY, Mr. Pain is certain that its readers will for the most part side with the party of power. "Some may back the Communists — there can be risky people among businessmen too. But this risk is somehow too great. Savva Morozov demonstrated what risk you run by investing in the revolutionary, Bolshevik movement. Unfortunately, there are bad politicians among good democrats. The period of reform was not a period of disasters, and the democrats should have defended it with greater determination than they do now. And even the drawbacks of the Chechnya policy should not have induced the democrats to adopt the line of conduct reminiscent of the behavior of the whales who sometimes throw themselves onto the shore and smash against the ground there."

Russia: Shumeyko Justifies Backing Yeltsin for President

MM1402115496 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

["Exclusive interview" with Vladimir Shumeyko, leader of the "Reforms-New Policy" movement, by Anna Kozyreva under the "Topical Interview" rubric; place and date not given: "You Do Not Change Your Captain Halfway"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vladimir Shumeyko, chairman of the "Reforms-New Policy" movement, believes that Boris Yeltsin is the presidential candidate we must support today. Why? In a ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA exclusive interview Vladimir Shumeyko replied to that question as follows.

[Shumeyko] Russia's democracy was hard won. Today we do not even notice how great the gains of democracy are. Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom to take part in rallies and demonstrations.... This is regarded as a given, as a way of life today. We have lived under the new Constitution for two years, no longer imagining any other kind of life. Today it is the unresolved problems which stand to the fore, this is only natural. People want to work and earn wages in a normal way. The state has not yet created the opportunities which enable the exercise of economic freedom. We set up our movement in order to find those opportunities.

The new policy was first determined by Yeltsin. As the ship's captain, he has mapped out the port of destination, but the ship's course is not a direct one, and it could encounter head winds, reefs, and shoals. The captain's art lies in setting the sails so that the ship always goes forward, does not run aground....

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[Kozyreva] Other candidates have emerged. Whom do you regard as Boris Yeltsin's main rival?

[Shumeyko] I think there are three: Gennadiy Zyuganov, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. I know them all personally and can assert that none of them is capable of resolving the problems facing Russia today. Yeltsin is not only the embodiment of Russia's reforms — he has drastically altered our whole history. He set the lead that we are now following.

As far as the other contenders are concerned, we know only their promises. Take, for example, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy. He is an erudite, witty man who quickly gets his bearings. He was in office but left the government because his "500 Days" program was not ratified by the USSR Supreme Soviet. But he was, you know, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers in charge of reform, not his own program! I believe that if he is elected president at such a critical juncture he will again abandon everything if all his proposals fail to gain approval.

Yeltsin, as president, is the guarantor of the Constitution, he does not shrink from responsibility or pass the buck. He initiated the reforms and must continue them. Yeltsin cannot abandon the state in today's difficult situation.

[Kozyreva] Many analysts think that Gennadiy Zyuganov, the Communists' leader, could come to power....

[Shumeyko] I am on good terms with Gennadiy Andreyevich. But I cannot understand when he says that the Communists will repeal our Constitution and start developing Russia in a different direction as soon as they come to power. The country will simply be unable to stand a new change! And will they want all 89 components of the Federation to abandon their political autonomy? I very much hope that this will not happen, that common sense will prevail, and that the country will vote for Boris Nikolayevich.

[Kozyreva] What is your attitude to "Russia Is Our Home" [NDR]?

[Shumeyko] I will not say whether it is a good or bad thing to create a party from above. But it does exist and is one of the four main parties. The NDR serves as the president's bulwark in the implementation of reforms. The existence of such a party is a positive factor for the state.

[Kozyreva] There has been a rumor that the two movements will merge.

[Shumeyko] No, that will not happen.

Russia: Zyuganov Collects Over 2 Million Signatures

LD1402162196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Over 2 million signatures have been collected in support of Russian Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov as a presidential candidate.

First deputy chairman of the Russian Communist Workers' Party Central Committee Valentin Kuptsov told a closed-door party plenum Tuesday [13 February] that they collected 2,060,000 signatures, a Communist faction source told INTERFAX.

Under the law on presidential elections, 1 million signatures are necessary for the official registration of a presidential candidate.

The left-wing forces are expected to officially nominate Zyuganov as their candidate for the Russian presidency on Thursday at the 4th party conference of the Russian Communist Workers' Party.

According to preliminary information, Zyuganov will be supported by chairman of the Agrarian Party Mikhail Lapshin, leader of the "People's Power" deputy group Nikolay Ryzhkov and heads of other communist organizations.

Russia: CPRF Nominates Zyuganov for Presidency

LD1502124896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 15 (ITAR-TASS) — The leader of the Russian Communist party [CPRF], Gennadiy Zyuganov, was nominated as a candidate for presidential elections by a conference of his party on Thursday.

A party resolution also proposed to Zyuganov to "unite around himself the leaders of parties and movements who declared support to a single candidate of the leftist forces".

Russia: Zyuganov Calls Yeltsin 'Weak Rival'

LD1502122396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1059 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 15 (INTERFAX) — Leader of the Russian Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov is confident that if he has to compete with the present head of state Boris Yeltsin in the last round of the upcoming presidential elections, his own victory will be predestined.

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"Yeltsin is a weak rival," he told journalists on Thursday before opening his party's conference, which is expected to officially nominate him as presidential candidate from the left.

When asked who could obstruct his efforts to become Russian president, Zyuganov answered laconically: "Provocateurs." He declined to elaborate.

Russia: 'Rumors' Question CPRF's Desire To Gain Power

MK1502062296 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[Article by Natalya Arkhangelskaya: "Communists Set Hopes on Providence Rather Than [Party] Rules"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] conference scheduled for 15 February is expected to nominate their leader, Gennadiy Zyuganov, as a presidential candidate. Party ideologists note, not without satisfaction, that this Thursday the Communists' great day coincides with the religious Feast of the Purification, which they see it as a good omen.

In all likelihood, the conference will be of a purely ritual nature, something typical of Communists. No unexpected things. There are three items on the agenda: the nomination of Zyuganov and the adoption of two documents — "On the Party's Tasks" and "On a Mandate for a Presidential Candidate." All is rather in keeping with the routine, and the only question left is: Why has a party that scored success in the December elections and that intends to do it again in the June elections been taking its time nominating its candidate, whose name is obvious to everyone?

It is true that some initiative group which has been functioning since 9 January — and which consists of ordinary citizens who, it is being especially stressed, carry no party cards — took it upon itself to nominate Zyuganov. The "ordinary citizens," however, acted in a rather professional way and managed to collect a million and a half signatures to back "Communist No. 1." On closer inspection, one can see that the group is being guided by people who, even if they are not CPRF members, entered the Duma on the party's lists — board members of the "Dukhovnoye Naslediye [Spiritual Heritage]" movement (led by cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskaya), which contested the parliamentary elections in alliance with the Communists. The signatures were indeed collected by CPRF activists. Why this masquerade?

The most "passable" explanation cited is that the CPRF rules make no mention of participation in the presidential elections as being a clearly formulated political goal. This could prove a snag in registering a party candidate with the Central Electoral Commission. However, this omission should be made up for, because there is a special decision in this regard by the Third Congress of the CPRF (January 1995).

Other observers think that Zyuganov's leadership in the party is far from being indisputable as far as his comrades in arms are concerned, for which reason there is no hurry about his nomination for the presidency. As for all these games about initiative groups with no party affiliation and a million and a half signatures are concerned, this is attempted outside pressure on the CPRF. At the same time, people in the know claim that the last round of the apparat bout to strengthen his positions in the party leadership was won by Zyuganov back in the middle of January, when he had Seleznev, who is ideologically close to him, installed as Duma speaker. The loser, as in the previous rounds, was Zyuganov's closest rival in the CPRF leadership, Valentin Kuptsov, who was also contesting this post. The controlling share of the CPRF remains with its former owner.

A third explanation appears more substantial and at the same time more interesting. Understanding perfectly that the Communist ideology proper is not as attractive to the electorate as the Communists would like it to be, party strategists decided to present Zyuganov as nominated, as it were, from the entire people rather than from the CPRF (the Communists do not conceal the fact that Zyuganov would not necessarily suspend his CPRF membership if he wins). Therefore, the initiative to nominate him, they allege, belongs to "ordinary citizens," with 17 opposition parties having already voiced a readiness to back it. The CPRF is only one of them. This stratagem is intended to somewhat comfort those disturbed at the prospect of having a Communist for president. Besides, it is working to expand Zyuganov's electoral base.

Widening the electoral base is problem number one for all presidential candidates. The Communists are trying to solve it in two ways: by nominating (in addition to Zyuganov) one or two standbys who would withdraw from the race one month before the elections to block the nomination of probable rivals who could divert votes. Aman Tuleyev, legislative assembly chairman and Federation Council member, is being proposed as a standby. Posing as undesirable competitors are "Working Russia" leader Viktor Anpilov and State Duma deputy Petr Romanov. Communist sources claim that there is a tough battle being waged for the immortal souls of the first two politicians by the current regime which, being absolutely uninterested in having a wider

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Communist electorate, is trying to "buy up" from its rivals promising leaders. Such feeble attempts were made with regard to Tuleyev, but without success. He might have asked too steep a price, something the Communists have already come up against. It was originally planned to reward Tuleyev for the votes of Kemerovo residents he had procured by making him transport minister in a government of people's confidence to be formed under Zyuganov. Today, however, "Aman the furious" is already claiming for himself the position of prime minister.

Anpilov presents another sort of problem. He is known to have received from the authorities moral and financial support during the December elections, which came in useful: He came close to clearing the 5-percent barrier. Sources in the CPRF claim that "suitcases with money" are being carried to Anpilov today as well, the result of which was his nominating himself for the presidency without prior agreement with the Zyuganovites. During last Saturday's scheduled Communist get-together, they seem to have managed to persuade Anpilov not to run. This could prove an illusory success, however: The "trudoviki" ["Working Russia" members] leader would like to have in exchange for his withdrawal the position of chairman of the People's Control Committee, which the Communists propose to reinstate, but the Zyuganovites think Anpilov is asking for too much.

It is even harder to handle the former director of the Krasnoyarsk Chemical Combine, Petr Romanov: He has already nominated himself for the presidency. There is no way to rein him in, because the production of excise-tax-free vodka in his home town of Krasnoyarsk has earned him substantial dough and the independence that goes with it. Therefore, the Communists, on whose ticket he entered the Duma, have given up on him.

And yet, strange as it is, the greatest problem that the Communists might face is their success in the June elections. This thought must after all be entering the sober minds among the Communist strategists, hence the constantly circulating loud rumors about the Communists being not all that eager to gain power. Taking the helm in this difficult transition period, they would inevitably lose much. Starting to mindlessly deliver on all of their campaign promises, they would run the risk of plunging the country into a chaos in which they would themselves perish. If they gamble on a pragmatic approach, they will soon realize that they can only maneuver within a narrow corridor along which they should proceed with caution. In this event, however, they would be losing the confidence of their voters, probably forever this time around. That is, of course, if the Communists keep the habit of holding democratic elections should they succeed in June 1996.

Russia: Medvedev Remarks on Yeltsin's Visit to Urals

LD1402162896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1428 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has not visited his hometown of Yekaterinburg and Russia's largest metallurgical center of Chelyabinsk for almost four years, presidential spokesman Sergey Medvedev told a briefing Wednesday when commenting on the president's visit to the Urals.

"The cities have problems the president would like to see for himself," he said. The spokesman reminded correspondents of Yeltsin's promise to announce his plans for the presidential race in Yekaterinburg on February 15.

On Thursday [15 February] the president will visit the monument to Soviet military commander Georgiy Zhukov and lay flowers to the memorial of Urals residents killed in the Afghan war.

He will also visit the cemetery where his father and friends are buried, and have a ride in the Yekaterinburg metro being constructed at his initiative.

The president will meet local leaders, regional Duma deputies and the press. At 2 p.m. moscow time the president will meet his fellow countrymen at the local youth palace.

Yeltsin will leave for Chelyabinsk Thursday night.

When in Chelyabinsk, he will meet local residents and business people at the business cooperation center, and visit the local employment service and training facilities. The president also wants to visit the Chelyabinsk pipe rolling plant and discuss social development plans with plant workers and specialists. Yeltsin will also meet deputies of the regional Duma.

The president's departure for Moscow is planned for Friday evening.

Russia: Yeltsin, Prosecutor Discuss Law Enforcement

LD1402125796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1214 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — President Yeltsin had a meeting today with Prosecutor-General Yuriy Skuratov. They discussed problems connected with the coordination of work of law enforcement agencies, as well as two

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draft laws — on the struggle against terrorism and on amending the Penal Code, Press Secretary of President Yeltsin Sergey Medvedev said at a briefing in the Kremlin.

Meeting the request of journalists, he spoke about an analytical report, submitted by Interior Minister Anatoliy Kulikov to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin . Medvedev stressed that it was not a final document, just a working report. Most probably, it was drawn up in response to numerous appeals of governors of Russian regions to improve the financial situation of the police, Medvedev said.

According to Medvedev, aside from the analytical report that was made public, Kulikov drafted a number of documents, including a conceptual framework of the development of law enforcement agencies. Yeltsin approved some of its provisions, specifically the idea that priority importance should be attached to the observance of human rights, the development of various forms of control over the work of law enforcement agencies and the improvement of conditions at penitentiary institutions, Medvedev continued. He said that Yeltsin had assigned Anatoliy Kulikov to draft regulations on the work of law enforcement agencies before April 1.

Russia: Yeltsin's Control Administration Chief Resigns

LD1402165296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1622 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 14 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has released Vladimir Zaytsev from the office of head of the Russian president's Control Administration at his own request. The head of state's press service reported this today.

Vladimir Zaytsev had occupied the post of chief of the Control Administration since January 1995.

Russia: New Representatives Explain Yeltsin's Choice

MK1402150296 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Aleksey Kirpichnikov: "Boris Yeltsin's New Representatives Tell About Prospects"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin's new personnel choice — the appointment of his representatives to the State Duma, the Federation Council, and the Constitutional Court — was explained at yesterday's news conference by these representatives — explained on the whole.

Mikhail Mityukov managed to argue very well in the Constitutional Court on 6 February for the president's inquiry on the unconstitutionality of [certain] provisions of the law on the parliamentary deputy status. Mr. Mityukov had the following proposals on the Constitutional Court's further work.

The main task is to help the head of state uphold the Fundamental Law when he appears in the Constitutional Court as "plaintiff" or "defendant" or interprets the Constitution and other "topical" questions. Inasmuch as the Constitutional Court has already accepted for examination more than 20 such cases, Boris Yeltsin, Mr. Mityukov said, should be represented by a professional, such as the former fist deputy speaker of the Duma in charge of lawmaking.

The president's plenipotentiaries to the Federal Assembly houses were appointed a little bit later, on 10 February. They have the same managerial status as Mr. Mityukov, which makes them equal in status to Boris Yeltsin's deputy chief of staff. Since the new upper house is not working on a permanent basis, Anatoliy Sliva's activity is going to be rather important: It is necessary to intensify contacts, not only with members of the Federation Council, but also with the Federal Council's staff and the staffs of its members. In Mr. Sliva's view, the task will be made easier because he is well known as the main developer of the law on local governance and head of the corresponding committee in the previous Duma. Owing to this, the current presidential representative has not only established close ties with a slew of regional leaders but also came to respect them just as they came to respect him.

Undoubtedly, Aleksandr Kotenkov faces the most formidable task of all. He also spoke of constructive interaction and protection of the head of state's constitutional prerogatives. He stressed that it is essential to raise the percentage of presidential and government draft laws approved by the Duma.

Boris Yeltsin's representatives spoke of having long been working together, which would further serve well in coordinating their efforts.

The following answers were given to delicate questions: All three said that the reason for the resignation of their predecessors was not politics, but their age and state of health; Mikhail Mityukov advised that, being a public official, he has suspended his "Democratic Choice of Russia" membership, while it was this membership that helped him to quickly master the intricacies of the deputy status.

Summing up the president's choices, we can note that neither the former "Democratic Choice of Russia" member, Mikhail Mityukov, nor Anatoliy Sliva of the PRES [Party of Russian Unity and Accord] are supposed

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to be rejected in their new positions. The other PRES member, Aleksandr Kotenkov could be rejected over the Duma's persistent dislike of his boss Sergey Shakhray, who filled many posts. However, Mr. Kotenkov, of course, can give up dogmas and his old attachments if any.

Russia: Deputy Premier on Privatization, New Policy

MK1302142396 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 13 Feb 96 pp 1-2

[Interview with Aleksandr Kazakov, Russian deputy premier, privatization minister, by unnamed KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent; place and date not given: "Things Should Take a Natural Course"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] For a deputy premier and head of a leading federal department, Aleksandr Kazakov is very democratic and has none of that sickly gleam in the eyes which always distinguishes an upstart who has ascended to the top of power "from rags to riches." In the informal table of rank, after his new appointment, he moved only one notch up, from the position of head of the presidential Administration on Work with Territories, which in effect gave him the status of a federal minister and direct access to the head of state. According to KOMMERSANT-DAILY sources, he did this without particular enthusiasm and under Boris Yeltsin's pressure. His lukewarm attitude to his current position is easy to explain: In the present conditions, when the main centers of power — the president, the government, and the Duma — have different ideas about the future of privatization, the post of privatization minister does not portend anything good, not even a long apparat life. Even so, at all times, Kremlin apparat rules have been tough: If the head of state offered a new position, refusal to accept it threatened an immediate resignation. It is naive to think that his new appointment was only due to Kazakov's business qualities. The deputy premier in the current Russian government is not simply a person nor simply a high-level official. This, above all, is a function based on a certain economic program. Aleksandr Kazakov explains the rationale behind his appointment to KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Can the state revise privatization results?

[Kazakov] I suppose it can. There is a whole range of reasons related not only to the change in the political lineup of forces but also to the equivocal assessment of the privatization process in society. It is a far from easy task to give an objective appraisal of privatization. You will surely agree that there is a lot of what is artificial and politicized. And we will hardly be able to find another area of economic reform around which the atmosphere would be so tense. Privatization is simply on everybody's lips. You can stop 10 people in the street and nine out of 10 will say that privatization is to blame for all economic woes. The State Duma even formed a special commission to analyze privatization results in 1992-1995. Our position is to help this commission put things in the right perspective and see and understand the actual processes and shed excessive emotionalism. Therefore I personally would very much like to hope for an objective and professional assessment of privatization results, because this will affect the consistency of the future course, which should protect us against slipping into another series of mistakes.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Is it planned to introduce substantial changes in the privatization policy in 1996?

[Kazakov] I think that the answer to this question to a large extent depends on the appraisal of what has already been done. But if you are interested in my personal opinion, I am convinced that some changes are necessary. They are called for primarily by the ultimate aim of privatization and the need for a long-term, clear-cut privatization strategy. In this connection it is important to adopt a definitive position on the role and place of state property in upholding the country's interests. It is impossible to move forward without defining on which field we are playing and without establishing the list of enterprises where privatization is inadmissible in any event. I also believe that the pace of privatization should be slowed down, making it more substantive — I would even say hand-tooled. Mass, across-the-board schemes should give way to pinpoint privatization, giving consideration, to the degree possible, to the interests of many sides concerned, above all, as I said earlier, state interests. Further work on privatization and its streamlining should necessarily be accompanied by the rectification of the mistakes made. The decisions which were made in violation of laws must definitely be reversed. The correction of mistakes which occurred in privatizing specific enterprises, however, must be based on laws. The next correction move should be renunciation of privatization from above. Today it is no longer possible to bulldoze this process along from the center. Things should be allowed to take a natural course; I believe that initiative should come from the enterprises themselves, whereas the center must create conditions which do not hinder its advance. Further corrections in the current privatization process should, in my opinion, include the devolution of greater powers to the regions, the strengthening of the role of the management component in the work of property committees, clarification of

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privatization methods, and some other aspects. [passage omitted]

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] How will privatization of the military-industrial complex proceed in this context?

[Kazakov] As concerns privatization technology, I do not anticipate any substantial changes, nor is this important. The essence of the problem in the defense complex lies in the subject of privatization. Here, like nowhere else, we must know absolutely well what can and what cannot be privatized under any conditions. I would not hurry with privatization in the defense sector without first answering this question and analyzing the answer a hundred times. At present a statutory act is pending which should clarify this process.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Do you think privatization revenue targets in the 1996 budget can be met?

[Kazakov] I will venture my own, possibly purely personal, point of view. It is not the 12 trillion [rubles] provided for in the budget that matters. What does matter is the fact that this is a key, fundamental question, closely connected with privatization strategy and objectives. I do not think it is right to regard privatization as a source to replenish the budget. I act on the assumption that funds received from privatization should be directed to investment — and nowhere else. But this is a different subject, and, responding to your question, I would like to observe that the answer to it primarily depends on the position of the State Duma, which is yet to be defined. I would like to be able to rely on the Duma's consistent position on this question. Either we meet the targets of the budget and then all talk about the "sellout of the Motherland" must stop, or we guard national property, and this part of budget revenues should then be excluded from the budget law. True, a compromise option is also possible, but it must be sanctioned by the State Duma. Yet, in any event, it is very important for us that the agencies responsible for approving the budget have a clear-cut and consistent position.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Did you consider such an option as initiating a cut in this revenue article?

[Kazakov] In fact, we are preparing such proposals, the aim being to avoid last year's situation, when an obviously exaggerated privatization receipt figure was included in the budget; when an attempt was made to meet it, we were immediately accused of selling the country piecemeal. The main problem in the work of the State Property Committee is clarity. I mean, legislative clarity, when there are clear-cut laws and a respectful attitude toward them, and this is when they can be effectively enforced. But it is impossible to work in conditions when, on one hand, we are made responsible for ensuring monetary receipts and, on the other, accused of selling state property.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Will the State Property Committee uphold a land market formation concept?

[Kazakov] This question is within the jurisdiction of several departments. It affects us insofar as concerns the privatization of the land plots under privatized enterprises. Our position is that we will seriously and consistently deal with this process. Privatized land enhances the independence of an economic subject and its market value.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Do you consider possible a revision of privatization results, and, as a consequence, mass nationalization?

[Kazakov] Yes, such a possibility exists. You cannot ignore the fact that the Duma is preparing a law on nationalization. It is another matter in what form it will be adopted, though.

[KOMMERSANT-DAILY] Is it feasible, in the next few months, to work out a civilized procedure for the return of earlier privatized state property, envisioning the payment of a substantial compensation to the former owner?

[Kazakov] Such a procedure is something we should seek to put in place. Property transfers are inevitable — this happens in the rest of the world. The form of this transition should be civilized, and therefore a mechanism for it should, of course, be worked out. [passage omitted]

Russia: Justice Minister Discusses Reform Issues

MM1502094596 Moscow TRUD in Russian 13 Feb 96 p 2

[Interview with Valentin Kovalev, Russian Federation minister of justice, by Aleksandr Danilkin; place and date not given: "Judicial Power Must Be Strong Too. Both Here and in Other Civilized Countries the Ministry of Justice Is Also Dubbed the 'Ministry for Fair Play.' In Russia It Is Headed by Valentin Kovalev"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Danilkin] Valentin Alekseyevich, does it not seem to you that, given the present scale of crime, the Ministry of Justice could make its presence felt more actively?

[Kovalev] Of course, our contribution could be weightier. This is why we have put forward a new concept for developing the organs of justice, which I have reported to the country's president. One of the first steps in this

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direction could be the transfer of the Ministry of Justice to the status of law enforcement organs.

[begin box] Information:

There are 2,540 courts and 15,598 judges in Russia. In 1970 554,589 people were sentenced in Russia, but last year this figure totaled approximately 1 million. [end box]

[Danilkin] What is of most concern to you?

[Kovalev] Do you know how many adopted court rulings relating to property foreclosures are actually carried out in the country today? Just 50 percent! Judicial executive power must be strengthened urgently and cardinally. We propose, in particular, to reinstate the system of bailiffs. This is essentially a court police — it exists in many countries. A law on bailiffs has already been adopted by the State Duma on its first reading.

The chief bailiff will head a militarized vertical hierarchy within the Ministry of Justice. The status of law enforcement organs presupposes that organs of justice are granted the right to institute criminal proceedings and conduct an investigation. I am talking of cases associated with preventing the implementation of court rulings and encroaching upon the independence and safety of judges.

[Danilkin] Recently judges themselves have been saying that the long-awaited judicial reform is starting to come to a standstill. The institution of justices of the peace has still not been introduced, and trial by jury remains at the experimental stage....

[begin box] Information:

Since 1994 juries have been created by way of an experiment in nine regions, and in the space of 18 months' work they have convicted just 325 people and acquitted 91, while the Supreme Court has quashed guilty verdicts against 15 people. Trial by jury does not operate in either Moscow or St. Petersburg. [end box]

[Kovalev] In actual fact there is just one obstacle, but it is a very important one: resources.

[Danilkin] You will agree that throughout the world the judicial system is the first thing to be ensured — the state's very existence depends on this. Our country finds trillions [currency not specified] for war, but not for justice.

[Kovalev] I agree, and I regularly demonstrate this myself. Nevertheless, let us not forget how much judicial reform costs. For example, it takes 6.5 times more resources to introduce trial by jury than a conventional court trial. This, in many respects, is the source of the difficulties.

The reform provides for the institution of justices of the peace to be introduced — there are none yet either. Justices of the peace are provided for in the new law on the judicial system, but deputies have disagreed over this document. I believe that the obstacle is surmountable, and we pin great hopes on justices of the peace: They will have to examine the overwhelming majority of all criminal cases in the country. I mean cases that do not pose a great public danger and civilian cases which do not present any particular professional difficulty. The Justice Ministry's claim for 1996 totaled 5.5 trillion rubles [R]. But the State Duma has allocated us just R1.9 trillion.

[Danilkin] Thus, all hopes of a speedy judicial reform at present remain "overboard," do they not?

[Kovalev] Within the limits of what is possible, the reform will continue. But you know: Cheap justice always costs the state very dearly later. The situation in the Russian courts now is such that we can think not about reform but just of preserving the judicial system! There are insufficient funds to make elementary provision for the customary judicial process. We cannot even pay traveling expenses to summon and accommodate witnesses....

[begin box] Information:

Since the article in the (1989) Criminal Code "Interference in the Resolution of Court Cases" was introduced, criminal proceedings have not been instituted in a single such case. Since 1994 19 people in the whole country have been convicted in the space of 18 months for threats or violent actions against court officials, [officials] of law enforcement or controlling organs, and also their close relatives, and there have been 28 convictions for insulting judges. [end box]

[Danilkin] What, then, is to be done?

[Kovalev] I raised a number of questions during my meeting with Boris Yeltsin. First, changes must be made urgently to the budget. Second, a nonbudget fund must be set up for organs of justice and the judicial system. Everyone knows that we have a fund for law enforcement organs, but in the past the judicial system was separated from the law enforcement organs. It was announced that the court must not fight crime but be an organ for resolving conflicts and stand "above everyone." This has been the result: The courts' activity is the source for replenishing the law enforcement organs' fund, but the courts themselves do not receive a single ruble from it.

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[Danilkin] How can you explain the fact that there are virtually no representatives of the mafia in the dock in Russia?... There are no major trials either.

[Kovalev] The judicial system examines only those criminal cases that have passed through the stage of preliminary investigation. In our country the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], the FSB [Federal Security Service], the Prosecutor's Office, and the Tax Police have the right to conduct an investigation. The court examines the cases that these structures send it.

[Danilkin] But how many criminal cases "collapse" during the trial itself?

[Kovalev] You have not forgotten how only recently people used to rebuke us, saying that under Soviet power there were very nearly 100-percent convictions in criminal cases. Now acquittals have appeared, and people are perplexed at something else: How come cases "collapse"? But cases with acquittals attest to democracy and the legal profession's potential, which is in demand. Without this, justice becomes a fiction.

[Danilkin] Let us not forget that the crime situation then was also quite different, after all....

[Kovalev] An accusatory bias is always bad. The court must act objectively. But there is a problem: Pressure on witnesses is frequently overlooked. Until we ensure the safety of the body of witnesses, it is extremely difficult to speak of reliable testimonies.

[begin box] Information:

Precisely 45 people were convicted of coercing witnesses to give false testimony (intimidation) in 1993, 22 in 1994, and 20 during the first half of 1995. [end box]

[Danilkin] How can you, as minister of justice, explain the fact that it has not yet been possible to adopt a law either on combating organized crime, or on combating corruption, or on money laundering?... There is not even a new Criminal Code. Someone's intrigues?

[Kovalev] The laws themselves have been prepared, and they are being examined. The fact that mutual understanding has not yet been reached is another matter. Because it is necessary to draw a very precise line between the fight against crime and the restriction of citizens' rights. I believe that we will in the end surmount the differences of opinion.

[Danilkin] Are you personally a supporter of tougher legislation?

[Kovalev] I am a supporter of greater liability for offenses. We should revise a number of the elements of crimes in the direction of stepping up punitive measures and include a number of new elements which were not in our code before. In the sphere of regulation of criminal procedure I believe that we should ensure so-called accelerated proceedings relating to certain categories of cases. Our judicial procedure is complex and heavyweight and is not always designed for modern crime — sometimes legal procedures drag on not just for months but even for years! In such a situation it is very difficult to speak of an effective struggle against crime.

[begin box] Information:

In 1993, 157 people were sentenced to death, and 10 people were executed in the same year. In 1994 160 people were sentenced to the supreme penalty, and 10 were executed. In 1995 the president pardoned five of the 91 people who were sentenced to death and who applied for a pardon. [end box]

[Danilkin] For how long, in your view, will we keep the death penalty as the supreme punitive measure?

[Kovalev] A prediction of precise times would result not so much from analysis as from intuition. There are both internal and external circumstances — admission to the Council of Europe, for example. Although I am opposed in principle to the death penalty.

[begin box] Information:

In 1995, law enforcement organs officially recorded 2,755,700 crimes (an increase of 4.7 percent over 1994) and 31,703 premeditated murders (a fall of 1.8 percent compared with 1994). [end box]

[Danilkin] There are difficulties over logic in our Criminal Code: You can commit as many as 20 crimes, but you will have to answer only for one.

[Kovalev] This is a problem not just of the present and not just for our country. Two major systems of law exist: the continental one (otherwise known as the Franco-German system) and the Anglo-Saxon one. The principle of cumulative sentencing operates precisely in the Anglo-Saxon system — it is known that it sets punishments in the form of imprisonment for up to 2,500 years by the method of addition. We have a different principle in criminal law — the method of maximum punishment, when liability is restricted to a maximum of one of the crimes committed. This principle is distinguished by lofty humanism.

[Danilkin] In my opinion, few people will support this principle today.

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[Kovalev] I agree, it must be critically reinterpreted at a time of intensifying the fight against crime. This does not mean that we must switch urgently to the Anglo-Saxon system, but we can choose options which will enable us both to take international experience into account and to observe our national traditions — punishment has never been "added up" in our country, not even under the czar....

[Danilkin] There have been a number of amnesties in the country in recent years. How justified were they?

[Kovalev] There have been very diverse amnesties in the history of our fatherland, including ones with adverse results. But lessons have been drawn from that. All amnesties in recent years have been worked out quite well: People who needed objectively to be released were liable to be released — invalids, elderly people, minors, and women who have committed crimes not representing a great public danger. From the moral viewpoint this category is, I believe, irreproachable.

[begin box] Information:

In the last amnesty (marking the 50th anniversary of victory) 131,190 people were released — 62,720 of them on having their cases examined in court. [end box]

[Danilkin] Are you a supporter of amnesties?

[Kovalev] I am a jurist and was brought up in the tradition of regarding the institution of amnesty as an inalienable element of criminal law. As well as the institution of the period of limitation with regard to crimes. An amnesty is also needed for the Chechen events, for example — here we have even resorted to nontraditional forms, which are unknown in world practice.

[Danilkin] What do you mean?

[Kovalev] The creation of a commission which examines citizens' petitions for criminal proceedings not to be instituted in respect of acts committed by them. Questions of this kind are usually resolved by law enforcement organs, but in Chechnya they are tackled beforehand by the commission, which ensures maximum consideration for the "individual component" of each case.

[Danilkin] The UN Human Rights Commission recommends transferring all penitentiary establishments from the MVD's jurisdiction to organs of justice. How realistic is this?

[Kovalev] There is indeed such a recommendation. We have taken it into consideration, regarding this formulation of the question as valid. With Internal Affairs Minister Anatoliy Kulikov we have formed a joint working group on the transfer. But the number of problems arising and their acuteness are such that the question of a time frame has not yet even been raised. We have agreed in principle on the phased transfer of the system of penitentiary establishments to the Ministry of Justice.

[Danilkin] What should people who are doing time expect from this?

[Kovalev] Above all, they will find themselves within the field of vision of a civilian establishment, for the Ministry of Justice is not a military department. Prisoners will work on a contract basis. Provision is made not only for state funds but also for money from financial-industrial groups to develop production facilities. At present a lot of workhands are unemployed in correctional labor establishments: Co-production ties have been destroyed, there are no orders, and there is a shortage of raw materials and working capital. In general, the entire educational labor process has turned into almost its opposite.

[Danilkin] On listening to you, it is possible to think that prison will take the place of a person's own mother and that it will be almost better to live and work there than at liberty....

[Kovalev] There simply is no other way to restore the social value of a criminal individual — only through labor. At the same time forced labor is prohibited within the framework of international law all over the world....

Russia: Federation Council Chair Stroyev Profiled

964F1029A Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No 4, 28 Jan-4 Feb 96 p 9

[Report by Anna Ostapchuk, under the "Politics" rubric: "Nonaffiliated Stroyev: Yegor Stroyev Turned Out To Be the Only Member of the Top Party Nomenklatura Who, After August 1991, Managed To Return to Real Politics in a New Capacity and Seriously Succeed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was only yesterday that, when speaking of President Yeltsin's personnel policy, two opposing teams were mentioned: Barsukov, Korzhakov, Soskovets—or Kozyrev, Filatov, Chubays.... Today many also say that the choice between the two teams has been made. Not everything is that simple, however. In some instances, the president prefers to search for a compromise. First and foremost when his decision requires parliamentary approval. True, the list of such names is short: General Procurator Yuriy Skuratov; Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin. Last week, another name was added to this list of compromises: Yegor Stroyev.

More than 80 percent of senators supported his election as upper house speaker. Among them: Yuriy Luzhkov,

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Mentimir Shaymiyev, Boris Nemtsov, Aman Tuleyev.... We know that this candidate had Boris Yeltsin's concurrence as well. Stroyev, the only one of the current senators, officially visited the president in Barvikha. So who is Yegor Stroyev, the man who has managed to meet the expectations of almost all senators—the right, the left, and the politically indifferent?

From the MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI file:

Yegor Semenovich Stroyev was born in 1937 in the village of Dudkino in Orel Oblast. He started his working career in 1955, and within eight years completed higher education by correspondence and rose from herdsman to production shop chief. Then his party career began. In 1963: deputy secretary and ideological department chief in the Uritsk Kolkhoz-Sovkhoz Administration Party Committee. In 1965: secretary of the Khotynetskiy Rayon CPSU Party Committee. In 1969: second secretary of the Pokrovskiy Rayon CPSU Party Committee. In 1970: first secretary of Orel Oblast's Pokrovskiy Rayon Party Committee. In 1973: Orel Oblast CPSU Party Committee secretary for agriculture. In 1984: CPSU Central Committee inspector. In 1985—first secretary of the Orel Oblast CPSU Oblast Committee. In 1986—member of the CPSU Central Committee. In 1990: at the July plenum of the CPSU Central Committee elected member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and CPSU Central Committee secretary for agriculture. Stroyev is a doctor of economic sciences, and a corresponding member of the All-Russia Agricultural Academy. He defended his doctorate thesis in 1994 on the topic "Methodology of Agricultural Reform." In the doctoral dissertation he compared the reform experience in North and Latin America, Europe, and Russia.

Stroyev came to the Central Committee to the "call of perestroyka." His selection was prompted by his reputation as a reformer at a time when Gorbachev greatly needed reformers. Because Orel Oblast had become one of the first test sites for land reform. True, private farming was not yet called that in those times—other words were used, such as "lease," "family contract."

In the Politburo, Stroyev was in charge of agriculture. The "agrarian sector" was never considered a particularly fertile field among Moscow politicians. The transition from "ideology" secretary to "agricultural" secretary meant de facto exile for Yegor Ligachev. The "dive" to agriculture symbolized the beginning of Aleksandr Rutskoy's falling out of favor. Only in the case of Yegor Stroyev did the agricultural path lead him to the heights of the political Olympus.

Legend has it that in the Central Committee Stroyev acted as Ligachev's opponent, who dug in his heels in defense of the kolkhoz-sovkhoz system. Today, however, Yegor Ligachev says that there were no disagreements between them. "We drafted the party's agrarian policy together," the former party ideologist, these days a member of the leadership of the orthodox communist Union of Communist Parties-CPSU, now says confidently.

In our conversation Ligachev suggested an important point, one of the true reasons why the left trusts Stroyev. On the surface, over the past several years he has untiredly emphasized that he is "an independent candidate," an oblast head not affiliated with any party, a politician loyal to the Kremlin. What Ligachev likes in him, however, is that "he does not change his convictions," "does not betray his past." Among the former (and current) communist leaders, who firmly believe that back then, in August, they were betrayed—first the top echelon, and then, one after another, all "support groups"—Stroyev's deliberate neutrality is already a big plus.

After the collapse of the CPSU in 1991, Stroyev returned to Orel and for two years headed the Institute for Fruit Crop Selection, remaining the most popular figure in the oblast. Boris Yeltsin was in no hurry to make a "Gorbachevite" from Orel part of his entourage. But even without presidential support, in April 1993 Stroyev won by a large margin in the gubernatorial elections over then acting oblast administration head Nikolay Yudin and four other rivals. In December of the same year he was elected Federation Council deputy. One of the first elected governors, Stroyev continued his personal reforms. Two programs got particular publicity: "The Orel Nonstop"—assembly-line housing construction, and "Program 100"—restoration of social infrastructure in 100 of the most backward and rundown villages in Orel Oblast. As Boris Nemtsov said during Stroyev's nomination to the post of Federation Council speaker, there are only two oblasts in Russia where agrarian reforms are actually taking place—Nizhniy Novgorod and Orel (this explains, of course, why Stroyev got to be so dear to Senate liberals' hearts).

In the first Federation Council, Yegor Stroyev served on the Budget Committee. He was not the most prominent senator, though—as, actually, was typical of most working regional leaders. In the previous upper house, "horseless" senators—those without positions in oblasts—were far more active. Only this past December did he take charge of the Senate-Duma reconciliation commission on the draft 1996 budget. This mission of his turned out to be quite successful: The budget was approved on time.

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Meanwhile, since the beginning of 1995 Stroyev increasingly often took part in government undertakings not as an observer but as an active participant, with his own program of relations with the federal center, his own idea of "budget federalism." Among the landmarks of his dialectic relationship with Moscow probably should be counted the conference on problems of gasification of the Chernozem belt (with the participation of Viktor Chernomyrdin) Stroyev organized in Kursk; the summer "expanded Council of Ministers," in which he participated as one of the key speakers; and the recent December conference of heads of interregional economic associations (MEA) in Orel. At this conference Stroyev—Chernozemye association chairman—was elected coordinator of the council of eight MEA's, which, as is known, represent all of Russia. Thus, the Orel governor came to spearhead the trend toward the economic regionalization of Russia.

It would therefore be quite logical to assume that the new Senate chairman will draw for support not on the right or the left but on deideologized pragmatic economic managers, who comprise the majority in the upper house and, instead of Moscow high politics, are more involved in solving their own regional problems and building relations with their neighbors and the federal center.

At his first press conference as the speaker, Yegor Stroyev indicated his position on many problems of key importance for him. "The most difficult question for me is how to combine my work in Moscow and Orel Oblast. My wife will cry and disagree. But if I were offered the Federation Council chairman position full-time, I would never have agreed," the chairman said flatly.

Stroyev also indicated his position on the "place and role" of the house chairman—an issue still being debated in the senate: "The speaker's role is defined by the Constitution. As to whether it is a political or a coordinating one....I think it is both."

As to Chechnya, the new speaker displayed a dialectical approach typical of him: "Since the first day of the Chechen events I have spoken against the use of force. I believe that guns start talking only after politics fails. We need to fight the bandits, however. Bandits must be defeated."

Assuming his new duties, Yegor Stroyev proposed a new system of political coordinates: "In the past, an attempt was made in the Federation Council to divide into two political platforms—democrats and Communists, but it was unsuccessful. In the end, the democrats and the Communists voted along one line, and regional leaders—along another." In the speaker's opinion, there are only two parties in Russia today—"the party of populists and the party of people thinking in realistic terms."

Russia: Medvedev Details New Procedure for Edicts

MM1402135896 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report on interview with Sergey Medvedev, the Russian Federation president's press secretary, by Dmitriy Orlov and Marina Kryuchkova; place and date not given: "Edicts Will Be Adopted Along With Government Decrees"]

[FBIS Translated Text] What is the significance of the change in the procedure for the publication of presidential edicts recently announced by Nikolay Yegorov, chief of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff? Your ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI correspondent asked Sergey Medvedev, the Russian Federation president's press secretary, to comment.

The change in the procedure for the president's adoption of normative acts does not mean, the president's press secretary stressed, that Boris Yeltsin's edicts were poorly worked out or legally contentious. That is not the point: Many of them had no implementation mechanism. According to Medvedev, edicts were not even accepted for implementation by the relevant ministries and departments without the relevant acts concretizing the president's normative acts (primarily government decrees).

Now only those draft normative acts that are accompanied by a package of government decrees will end up on the president's desk from those structures empowered to prepare draft edicts and directives (the Russian Federation Presidential Staff and the aides' service). Sergey Medvedev said that the new procedure does not mean the enactment of any new documents. "The procedure has simply changed," he explained. The Russian Federation Presidential Staff and the Russian Federation presidential aides' service have been made responsible for implementing the president's new procedure.

The president has already repeatedly addressed the question of improving the procedure for the formulation of acts issued by him. Thus, back on 5 February 1993 Boris Yeltsin approved the procedure for the drafting and submission of draft edicts and directives, then on 5 July 1994 he made changes to it. And the head of state issued an edict on closer collaboration between presidential structures and the government back on 10 June 1994. Thus, the main problem lies in the performance discipline of specific officials in presidential structures responsible for the formulation of normative acts.

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The documents signed last week — two presidential edicts and a package of government decrees — are an example of this "comprehensive" approach. They deal with the regulation of alcohol production, sales, and imports.

Among other things, provision is made for the introduction of minimum prices for vodkas and liqueurs over 28 degrees proof. In other words, the state has set a minimum retail price for vodka. If you add up the excise duty, value added tax, the prime cost, and trade markups, the retail price of half a liter of vodka will come to around 10,000-12,000 rubles [R]. That is, 15 percent more than it is today. But the consumer gets incomparably more guarantees that he is buying a high-quality drink rather than a dodgy imitation.

A new rate of excise duty for vodkas and liqueurs has also been set — at least R10,000 per liter. What is more, enterprises manufacturing ethyl alcohol and alcohol must now provide quarterly reports on their level of production and use of alcohol. The procedure for the importation of alcohol is also being tightened up. Imports are limited to 20 percent of the total quantity of alcohol sold in the country. In addition, alcohol import quotas have been introduced as of 1 June.

The government hopes that all these measures will not only make it possible to bring in an extra R35-40 trillion to the treasury but also to protect the Russian commodity producer, crippled by competing with cheap, poor-quality output from illicit "distilleries" and blatant smuggling.

Incidentally, the presidential Edict "On Strengthening State Control of Sales of Foreign-Made Alcohol and Tobacco," signed at the same time as the aforementioned government documents, is primarily directed against smugglers. The presidential edict stipulates a fairly tough penalty for any breach of the regulations governing the sale of alcohol — 5,000 times the minimum wage! Unlabeled goods will be confiscated and the prosecutor's office has won the right to institute criminal proceedings against offending firms.

Russia: Differences Over Budget Funding Viewed

MM1502113196 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Irina Savvateyeva: "Authorities' Promises Cost Tens of Trillions. But Where Can They Find This Money?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] What might be the cost to the budget of the promises that both the executive and the legislative branches of power have been making right, left, and center since the beginning of the year? They include money for Chechnya and the miners, an increase in student stipends, and compensation for pensioners. Finally there is the indexation of the minimum wage....

In the opinion of Economic Analysis Institute Director Andrey Illarionov, the cost of the unplanned budgetary decisions on expenditure adopted over the past one and a half months by the executive branch of power alone is approaching 41 trillion rubles [R]. Illarionov calculates that these 41 trillion include the "unplanned extra" expenditure connected with the presidential edicts on compensatory payments for pensioners and the increasing of student stipends; expenditure for the payment of unpaid wages; payments to miners; the 7-trillion increase in expenditure on the defense sector; and finally expenditure on the rebuilding of Chechnya — and these are only the ruble payments.

In the opinion of the Economic Analysis Institute director, the State Duma's decision to index the minimum wage significantly increases the necessity for unplanned extra expenditure both from the federal and the local budgets. Thus, Andrey Illarionov calculates that the consolidated budget's total unplanned expenditure during the current year might amount to R80 trillion. At the same time, Illarionov reminds us, the total expenditure for the 1996 budget amounts to R448 trillion and the deficit is a little more than R80 trillion.

"The budget does not possess such resources," Andrey Illarionov attests. "It is impossible to attract such resources either in the internal or the external market. This means that the authorities will have to borrow [osushchestvit kreditnuyu emissiyu] at a level of 4-5 percent of GDP.

In Illarionov's opinion, the printing of uncovered paper money will result in an increase in the average monthly inflation rate to 10 percent. But the money supply will emerge into the market no sooner than the fall — in September/October. But our troubles will not end here, the Economic Analysis Institute director continues. In the event of the scenario described above coming to pass, Russia will most likely be refused extended credit by the IMF. This means that serious problems will arise when obtaining credit from the World Bank and when restructuring the foreign debt and floating state securities on the external market: Planned sources of income will disappear and unplanned budget expenditure will arise.

"Under these circumstances, the budget deficit will begin to rise not to 8 or 10 percent but to 15 percent," Andrey Illarionov says in conclusion. "Consequently, the relatively modest results that were achieved through the selfless struggle of several former members of the

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government will be canceled out in a single wave of blatantly populist policy."

However, not all experts are inclined to dramatize the situation to such an extent. Mikhail Zadornov, chairman of the State Duma Budget Committee, points out that the 20-percent increase in the student stipend stipulated by the presidential edict should occur from 1 April — that is from the very time when it is written into the budget that indexation of all social expenditure will occur.

The presidential edict on wages can also be implemented, Mikhail Zadornov considers. But only gradually and only "if there is no deviation and the money does not begin to get diverted for example to Chechnya."

But the Duma committee chairman considers the unplanned extra payments to "Rosugol" to be a blatant violation of the Law on the Budget by the executive branch of power.

"The 'Rosugol' company received R600 billion," Mikhail Zadornov emphasized, "as the Russian regions could not wait for the transfer they were supposed to receive between the 20th and the 30th of the month. The teachers and the doctors in the subsidized regions who did not receive their pay for two months can say 'thank-you' to the organizers of the miners' strike."

There is as yet absolutely nothing definite about the expenditure on reconstruction work in Chechnya. The Duma is waiting for a quarterly breakdown of the budget, which the government should present any day now. This document will make it absolutely clear at whose expense the executive branch actually intends to scrape together R16.2 trillion and $1 billion for Chechnya. It is certainly possible that, on receiving the document, the deputies will raise the question of whether certain items of expenditure are constitutional. According to Mikhail Zadornov, the present situation regarding funding for Chechnya is as follows:

"According to my information, Chechnya has not in the past one and a half months been allotted anything over and above what the budget stipulated it should have transferred to it."

As regards the State Duma's decision to index the minimum wage by 20 percent from 1 February, it will, in the view of Budget Committee Deputy Chairman Aleksandr Zhukov, cost the federal budget around R1 trillion. The unplanned extra expenditure will have to be made over a two-month period: The budget only stipulates the 20-percent indexation from 1 April. However, in Zhukov's opinion, the local budgets will have things hardest: They have no money for additional indexation.

"It is most likely that the situation will end in the traditional manner with the nonpayment of wages," Aleksandr Zhukov comments.

It looks as if the matter will also end in just this way — with the adopted decisions not being carried out — with regard to other edicts and decrees, which the authorities, who are obsessed with populism, have managed to spawn in the last one and a half months.

Russia: European Left, Russian Communists Compared

964F1025A Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No 4, 28 Jan-4 Feb 96 p 5

[Article by Pavel Kandel, head of a department of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Europe: "Democrats in Russia and East Europe"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The English piece of wisdom to the effect that the only free cheese is in a mousetrap was just as popular among the Russian authors of market reforms and politicians who called themselves "democrats" as references to the example of the countries of Central and East Europe. The intonation given these words implied that the non-free nature of the transformations that were being undertaken was perfectly obvious to the speakers. True, it was doubtful that they themselves were intending to pay the bills even then.

Both the saying and the appeal to the experience of the Central Europeans dropped out of journalistic use almost simultaneously—as soon as an unpleasant general rule was discovered. The inevitable price even of reforms that are successful in terms of macroeconomic indicators, but socially unacceptable, is the return to power of forces of the left and, correspondingly, the loss of it by those with whom these reforms are associated in the public mind. Of all the countries of the region, this pattern did not work only in the Czech Republic, and not at all fortuitously. Although the Czech example, Vaclav Klaus, is the most striking and most successful representative of the current theoretically related to Russia's Gaydarites, the transition to the market there was of the least shock nature, and the proportion of social spending in the budget distinguished the country among its regional neighbors.

Our reformers were reluctant to take account of the experience consistently borne out in Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, and Bulgaria. Nor did the 1993 elections in Russia teach them anything. Consequently, there was no alternative to the reckoning also: the composition of the State Duma after the 1995 elections and the anticipated defeat of the democrats at the presidential elections. Even were the present president

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to squeeze out a victory at them, this victory would be of significance only to Boris Yeltsin and his "court": It would drive the native democrats only into a worse mousetrap. Here the analogies with Central and East Europe end, and the differences become particularly striking.

The main thing, perhaps, is that the democratic forces in the countries of this region were able to establish normal parliamentary republics. Even threatened with a loss of power, it would never occur either to the right or the left to substitute for elections a plebiscite on an extension of their term or to contemplate a transition to monarchical rule. Even Lech Walesa, who is distinguished by a political temperament similar to that of Boris Yeltsin, which finds it hard to accommodate itself to the constitutional framework, could not violate the democratic procedure of a change of power.

In Russia the democrats invested all their political capital in the authoritarian 1993 Constitution, which was carved out in such a way as to ensure that the "popularly elected" be under absolutely no constraint. They discovered no concern at such a structure of power until they themselves found themselves outside of it, and the victory of the Communist and nationalist forces had become almost irrevocable.

But the social democratic parties of the Central and East European countries that have come to power have a political profile that is totally different from that of the Russian Communists also. A different program, different goal, different composition and age of the party members, different type of leaders, different models for emulation and genealogy—the policy is different as well. In order to see the difference, it is sufficient to directly project, for example, Polish political realities onto the Russian political stage. We should then today be talking not about the party of Gennadiy Zyuganov but of the party manque of former reformer Communists of the Mikhail Gorbachev and Aleksandr Yakovlev type, but twice as young and headed by a leader of the Grigoriy Yavlinskiy type. Alas, for the present Russian Communists the former reformers are among the most hated, the political flirtation with Yabloko is no more than a tactical game, the goal is in the past, and the main motive is revanche.

In Central and East Europe elections mean a change of cabinet and a course correction, in Russia, not only a change of political regime but a threat of "great upheavals" also. It is hardly possible to change the nature of national Bolshevism and overcome the logic of its self-development. The fate of the present democrats and their position would no longer appear to have any bearing on the impending political clash. Having squandered society's enormous democratic potential on support for inherently alien authorities and socially unacceptable transformations and on fratricidal squabbles and the rivalry of the leaders, they themselves have rendered themselves hors de combat. What is worst is that Russia will have to satisfy itself of the inevitability of movement toward democracy and the market "from the contrary." Four years must suffice for their supporters to update strategy, find leaders who have not compromised themselves, and create a united organization. Whether the new coming of the Communists and nationalists or the death-throes of the current regime last for any length of time will, in fact, depend on the revival of their strength. A Russia that has joined the Council of Europe is still not Europe, even compared with its eastern part. But nor can it cease to aspire to Europe without having changed its history and culture.

Military Issues

Russia: Grachev Seen Ignoring Yeltsin Order To Fire Finance Chief

MK1502133296 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Igor Volobuyev: "Grachev Takes No Orders From Yeltsin"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colonel General V.V. Vorobyev was removed from the position of chief of the Main Directorate of Military Budget and Finance by President of Russia Boris Yeltsin's Edict No. 1175 of 23 November 1995 "for crude financial violations and the unsatisfactory fulfillment of government decrees." However, the defense minister did not heed the president during the intervening two and a half months and issued no order to remove the general.

Last November, documents were put on the president's desk establishing that Vorobyev was guilty of lending to commercial banks at interest money intended for the Defense Ministry's needs. Former Russian Federation Defense Minister Ye. Shaposhnikov at one time opposed the appointment of the colonel general to this position, but that was in May 1992, when Y. Shaposhnikov was leaving his post and Grachev was yet to be appointed.

And only now has the Russian Defense Ministry reacted to the presidential edict and... proposed Colonel General V. Vorobyev for appointment as a deputy to the main military inspector general of the Defense Ministry's financial inspectorate. MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS has learned that the appointment is supposed to be made in the next few days.

Concurrently, Vorobyev's first deputy, V.N. Kuznetsov has been proposed for appointment to his boss's posi-

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tion, despite the fact that no due check on his joint activities with Vorobyev has ever been carried out, while the Russian Finance Ministry has serious objections to Kuznetsov's candidacy.

There is only one possible conclusion: Our own Defense Ministry is defending its financial bastions far better than its positions in the conflict zones.

Russia: Grachev Accused of Violating Law in Land Deal

MK1502132996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Feliks Tokarev: "Minister Captures Beachhead"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to a SEVERNYY KAVKAZ newspaper report, Nina Zatsepina, Russian Federation State Duma deputy elected in the Novorossiysk constituency, has circulated an official document from which it follows that Defense Minister Pavel Grachev bypassed the law in receiving a plot of land on the Black Sea coast.

From the facts available to the deputy it has become clear that the administration of Gelendzhik issued a string of decrees on 13 April 1994 on providing servicemen of the Transbaykal Military District who were being discharged into the reserves with plots of land for the construction of their own apartment houses. One of these decrees speaks of "Citizen Pavel Sergeyevich Grachev, born in 1948, serving in the Transbaykal Military District, with more than 26 full years served" being discharging into the reserves in the fourth quarter of 1994. Under the Gelendzhik mayor's directive, "Citizen P.S. Grachev" was assigned 1,050 square meters of land in the area of the Chayka Hotel, a rather prestigious area of the health resort town. A private house is now being erected on this site using the manpower of Defense Ministry special subunits.

Russia: State Owes Defense Industry R9 Trillion

LD1402192296 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1600 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The state owes the defense industry about 9 trillion rubles [R]. Ekho Moskvy has learned that as things stood on 10 January this year not a single item of state financing for the defense industry had been 100 percent fulfilled. Regarding the implementation of international agreements on reducing and destroying armaments and military hardware, the debt in terms of this item has exceeded R740 billion.

Russia: General Staff Discusses Resolving Military Conflicts

LD1402235496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1607 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] The General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces discussed procedures for resolving military conflicts. The information directorate of the Defence Ministry informed ITAR-TASS that at a General Staff meeting today, leaders of military and other departments discussed the problems of setting up a nationwide system of information gathering for the forecasting and timely localization of conflicts. In the opinion of specialists, this would enable the country's top leadership to take the necessary decisions at early stages in the development of conflicts.

Col-Gen Viktor Barynkin, chief of the Main Operations Directorate of Russia's General Staff, stressed that it is necessary to use to the full the analytical potential and the capability of this nerve centre of the RF [Russian Federation] Armed Forces to coordinate the actions of the power departments and other state structures in the interests of preventing military conflicts or resolving them by use of military force.

The participants in the training session on procedures spoke of the pressing need for further scientific development on problems relating to the study of military conflict and for the creation of a legal basis for gathering essential information for forecasting complex situations representing a danger to the state.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Fails To Overrule Veto on Military Service Law

LD1402161896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1425 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 14 (INTERFAX) — The State Duma failed on Wednesday [14 February] to overrule Russina President Boris Yeltsin's veto on two amendments to the law on military service.

The first amendment reduces the length of military service for those deployed in trouble spots to 1.5 years. The second amendment exempts a draftee from service if he is the only son in a one-parent family and his parent is over 52 years old.

The first amendment was supported by 290 deputies (for the amendment to be adopted it needed 300 votes) and four deputies voted against. The second amendment was voted 282-106 with three abstentions.

Both amendments were supported by Yabloko, Russian Regions and independent deputies, including Galina

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Starovoytova, Sergey Yushenkov and Yuliy Rybakov. Opponents included Vladimir Zhirinovskiy of the Liberal Democratic Party, Viktor Ilyukhin of the Communist Party, the chairman of the Duma Security Committee, and others.

Vyacheslav Zherebtsov, deputy chief of the general staff, said the amendments could "destabilize the situation in the army" and leave the armed forces short of servicemen in the spring when 500,000 soldiers will be demobilized, but only 200,000 new will be drafted.

Earlier in the day, the Duma decided, at the insistence of deputy Vladimir Semago of the Communist Party, against voting on a third amendment reducing the length of service to 1.5 years for those who were drafted before October 1, 1995.

Russia: Social Laws To Be Based on 'Real Economic Situation'

LD1402135596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1322 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Lyudmila Yermakova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 14 (ITAR-TASS) — Apparently, the Federation Council will not approve the laws, adopted by the Russian State Duma, on the rise in minimum wages and pensions as they cannot be fully financed.

The implementation of these laws would require additionally one trillion 43.5 billion roubles per month for wages and one trillion 400 billion roubles for the indexation of pensions.

Chronic delays in the payments of wages and pensions showed that the government has not enough financial resources for settlements with the population even in accordance with the existing legislation.

This was stated at the latest meeting of the Federation Council which considered laws on a subsistence wage, the compensation to residents of the northern regions of Russia and some other legislative acts requiring additional funds. They were voted down as "populist and unreal."

Those members of the upper house who also head power bodies in regions, proceeded from the fact that the implementation of such laws would be a heavy burden to subjects of the Federation but their budgets for this year had not included the necessary expenses.

These parliamentarians agreed with the viewpoint of Russian President Boris Yeltsin who had not signed a number of such laws and pointed out to the need to "take into account the real economic situation in the country."

The Federation Council Committee for Economic Policy plans to adopt at a next meeting an appeal to the State Duma proposing not to pass the laws the implementation of which cannot be sufficiently financed.

The Ministry of Social Protection and the Finance Ministry, whose representative spoke at a meeting of the Federation Council last week, noted the negative consequences of the adoption of new decisions requiring additional financial resources.

At the same time members of the upper chamber stressed the urgency to work out laws which would guarantee worthy life to Russian citizens.

They set up working groups which together with their colleagues from the State Duma were assigned to prepare new versions of laws.

Also under consideration are documents on the mechanism for the implementation of laws on education, veterans and other acts aimed at the financial support for different sections of the population.

Parliamentarians intend to "find realistic, not imaginary, solutions to the tasks in the interests of society."

According to Chairman of the Federation Council, Yegor Stroyev, it is necessary to carry out "substantiated lawmaking work with determined top priorities but not adopt momentary decision on laws."

He informed deputies that he had agreed with the State Duma and the government to hold a discussion in order to coordinate their positions on these problems, first of all, to elaborate a concept of economic security of Russia.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Yeltsin in Yekaterinburg; Comments on Chechnya

LD1502134396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 15 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Russian President Boris Yeltsin has begun his visit to the Urals region. In the morning, he visited a confectionery factory in Yekaterinburg, met the enterprise managers, and chatted with the workers:

[Begin recording] [Yeltsin] Hello, nice to see old friends! [end recording]

[Correspondent S. Milyanchikov] This sort of greeting can be heard everywhere along the route of the president's motorcade throughout Yekaterinburg. Early this

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morning, Boris Yeltsin visited his father's graveside. He hadn't been in his hometown for four years and, of course, he found it interesting to see the changes that had taken place in the town. A memorial to Marshal Zhukov was unveiled here on Victory Day and, as Boris Yeltsin pointed out that he likes it more than the one in Moscow. And a meeting with war veterans took place here at the memorial:

[Begin recording] [video shows Yeltsin laying flowers at graveside; looking at Zhukov memorial] [Unidentified man in crowd, addressing Yeltsin] A hospital for the war disabled has been built in our town.

[Yeltsin] Yes, and a second section, too.

[Man] Yes, this hospital has been going very well; we are very happy with it. But now the hospital is on the verge of closure.

[Yeltsin] Why?

[Man] There is no money.

[Yeltsin] For a start, I will give you 5 billion rubles from our reserves.

[Man] Fine.

[Yeltsin] Then it will be here for good. [end recording] [passage omitted: report on Yeltsin visiting subway station, "Black Tulips" memorial to Afghan war veterans] [video shows Yeltsin posing with locals, Yeltsin riding in metro, being helped to his feet in subway car and shown around subway station]

A conversation with journalists, which was not covered by protocol, on the problem of settling the Chechen crisis also took place at the memorial:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] These gangs are carrying out 20 or 30 attacks every day. What can we do? We have to protect the peaceful population. Otherwise, there would be carnage. If we withdrew our federal troops from there now, they would slaughter all the peaceful population who are still there. No way can we do this. People keep saying: Yeltsin, take your troops out! As if it were so easy to withdraw the troops. When we finish there and it is all over, we will withdraw our troops, and only those troops who are stationed throughout Russia will remain there. And we will demand that the ringleaders — Dudayev, Raduyev and Basayev — these bandits should be handed over to us, and they should be shot. [video shows Yeltsin talking to crowd of people] [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Elections at Yekaterinburg Airport

LD1502103896 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0500 GMT 15 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1715 Moscow time [1415 GMT], the aircraft of the Russian president landed in the airport of the city of Yekaterinburg. The journalists who had arrived an hour earlier managed to put questions to Boris Yeltsin. The president confirmed his wish to announce whether or not he will stand for a second term in Yekaterinburg. The head of state will talk about this at a meeting with his fellow Yekaterinburgers. But a cautious prediction is already possible: Boris Yeltsin will probably say yes.

In a brief interview at the airport, the president said that he will mainly go by the results of the recent parliamentary elections in making his decision. Clearly meaning the arrival in power of the candidate of the majority in the State Duma [Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation], Boris Yeltsin himself put a question to reporters:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] First of all, I had to wait for the results of the elections to the State Duma, to see how it would turn out, and then draw a conclusion as to what might happen. Would the reforms end with the departure of President Yeltsin and the arrival of a different president? [end recording] [video shows Yeltsin leaving aircraft, then speaking to reporters]

Russia: Yeltsin 'Not Satisfied' With Army Reforms

LD1502074396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0656 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yekaterinburg, 15 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — "I am not satisfied with the way that reforming the army and the Armed Forces is going as a whole," Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated today, replying to the ITAR-TASS correspondent in Yekaterinburg, after the ceremony of laying flowers at the monument to the great Russian military leader, Georgiy Zhukov. According to Boris Yeltsin, up till now reform has primarily been taking place along Ministry of Defense lines. "That is, it has to reform itself as it were," the head of state stressed. And this means additional concerns, additional expenditure. Therefore, the president has instructed that a commission should be set up to deal with reforming the army.

The commission is currently engaged in drawing up a concept for reform according to deadlines and targets.

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The president reported that it is expected that the commission's conclusions will be submitted for the Security Council to examine; the latter will monitor the implementation of all the measures relating to reform in the army. According to Boris Yeltsin "reform is going badly, although Defense Minister Pavel Grachev seems to think that everything is going normally." The president stressed that he is resolutely inclined to strengthen the Russian Armed Forces.

Russia: Yeltsin Notes That Inflation Has 'Dropped Appreciably'

LD1502113896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1057 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Nadezhda Potapova, Andrey Surzhansky, and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEKATERINBURG, Feb 15 (ITAR-TASS) — "I had many talks with Yekaterinburg residents in the streets and at local plants. Their mood is good: They are urging me to run for the second presidential term," President Boris Yeltsin told a meeting here with regional leaders and administrative heads of cities and districts of Sverdlovsk Region. It was also attended by several members of the Russian government. "I can only say that I will answer these calls later at the Youth Palace of Yekaterinburg," the President stressed.

Describing his talks with the local population, Yeltsin noted that "there was no whimpering and the people were in a calm mood; nobody waved red banners." Yeltsin said that they had problems but they discussed them with him in a businesslike way. "Of course, I came to Yekaterinburg not only on business, but also to make a difficult decision for myself: To run for the presidency for the second time or not. I shall first speak to the people here, shall consult them," Yeltsin stated.

Dwelling on the situation in the country, the President noted that it was changing and that this was quite apparent in Sverdlovsk Region. "The changes in Russia are of historical importance. I don't want to step down when it comes to either... or. The upcoming elections will be exactly of this sort," he said.

The President pointed out that production was beginning to perk up for the first time in several large sectors of the Russian industry, including the ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy, petrochemical, paper-and-pulp, and building industries. Yeltsin noted that the level of inflation had dropped apreciably. The external debt that was inherited from the former USSR was rescheduled thanks to the efforts of the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the G-7, the President stressed. "This debt," Yeltsin stated, "was split up into small parts and the term of its repayment was prolonged to twenty years."

Russia: Yeltsin's Activities in Yekaterinburg Shown

LD1502093896 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0800 GMT 15 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yeltsin's working visit to Yekaterinburg began this morning (video shows car pulling up on city street, Yeltsin emerging). The president visited the Konfi joint-stock company where new products are being developed. He then laid flowers at the new monument to Marshal Zhukov where he met veterans of the Great Patriotic War. (video shows monument, Yeltsin, joking and shaking hands with veterans).

Speaking about their problems, he said that the government is promising to pay pensions on time. He also promised money for a local hospital. Next stop was the monument to the dead of the Afghan War (video shows monument and Yeltsin chatting to crowd). Here he met with representatives of the Urals association of Afghan veterans.

Speaking on the problems involved in settling the Chechen crisis, the president said that it is still early to talk of a complete troop withdrawal. According to Boris Yeltsin, if troops are withdrawn now a new bloodbath will begin in Chechnya.

Boris Yeltsin then took a ride on the Yekaterinburg metro (video shows Yeltsin accompanied by Yekaterinburg head of administration Eduard Rossel and crowd walking down aisle of underground station). Just now he is meeting with the heads of administration of the oblasts of the Urals region. And this evening he will announce his decision whether or not to put forward his candidacy at the presidential election at a meeting with the public.

Russia: Yeltsin Visit Elicits Mixed Feelings in Yekaterinburg

MK1402133896 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Viktor Smirnov under the "Yekaterinburg Is Waiting for Yeltsin" rubric: "Bread and Salt Being Prepared for the President, But Salt Is Still More Plentiful Than Bread"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian president's promise to make a decision on whether to run for another term "approximately in mid-February," to all appearances,

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will be fulfilled in his native Yekaterinburg on 15 February. Moreover, no one has any doubts as to the fact that the president will say "Yes." Upon agreement with Sverdlovsk Oblast Governor Eduard Rossel, the president's itinerary is approximately as follows. Yeltsin is due to visit his father's grave at the Shirokorechenskoye Cemetery, see the monuments to Georgiy Zhukov and servicemen killed in Afghanistan — "The Black Tulip" — meet with the administration heads of cities and rayons, chief editors of the mass media of the Urals and Far Eastern regions, and also Yekaterinburg's public. It is precisely at the meeting with the public at the Youth Palace that Yeltsin is expected to make his announcement.

According to representatives of the presidential press service, who have been in Yekaterinburg for about a week, the visit to his hearth and home will mark the start of a series of Yeltsin trips around the country. After Yekaterinburg he is due to head for Chelyabinsk, where, by some accounts, he will make a political statement on Chechnya. Some time later the head of state will be welcomed in Murmansk.

All of Yekaterinburg is looking forward to seeing the president, who has not set foot in his home town for about six years. The public utility services are meticulously cleaning the roads and improving the street lighting. An unexpected joy at the Press House — they are whitewashing ceilings, painting walls, and repairing toilets. It will host Yeltsin's meeting with the editors of Urals newspapers.

At the oblast administration, the telephones are ringing off the hook: Citizens are inquiring about what arrangements are needed to attend a meeting with their great countryman. Bureaucrats have a different headache: How to accommodate arriving journalists? A total of 150 foreign newsmen alone wished to cover the Urals visit of the Russian head of state, to say nothing of "domestic" ones. On this occasion a press center is being set up at the Youth Palace, which was given a facelift for the momentous event. The palace director has promised to put all available telephones at its disposal.

A few more initiative groups to nominate Yeltsin for another presidential term are being speedily knocked together. Meanwhile, representatives of the presidential press service in Yekaterinburg have suggested that in all likelihood Boris Yeltsin will let himself be nominated by the association of Kamchatov, the presidential representative in Moscow and Moscow Oblast, who is also his old comrade-in-arms. At the same time, some Yekaterinburg residents, primarily of advanced age, are conducting independent "public opinion polls." They ask people right on the street: "What do you expect from the president's visit?" There have been as yet few answers favorable to Yeltsin.

The mood of the reinforced militia details loitering at street corners is not festive either. Quite recently they went on strike, disgruntled over back wages. Industrial enterprise directors do not harbor any illusions either.

During his meeting with them on the eve of the distinguished guest's arrival, Sverdlovsk Oblast Governor Eduard Rossel was at great pains to convince them that the incumbent Russian president has no alternative. In the governor's view, given all the negative trends in the Russian economy and, particularly, the growing influence of leftist forces in the federal authorities, Yeltsin alone can guarantee the irreversibility of reform. The crux of Rossel's statement was that, even having been unjustly rapped by Yeltsin over his idea of a Urals Republic, he still believes in the potential of his great countryman and remains a true supporter. Direct evidence of that are the transformations carried out by Rossel in the region. The governor emphasized for the umpteenth time the president's role in helping Sverdlovsk Oblast achieve genuine political and economic independence. This should be understood as follows: Had Yeltsin not adopted a principled stance on this matter, there would have been no treaty or agreements on delimiting jurisdiction and authority with the center.

The industrialists' initially lukewarm reaction to Rossel's readiness to pass all their grievances to the president before his arrival finally turned into undisguised hostility. With high taxes, endemic nonpayments, the current capital crunch, and workers' increasing disgruntlement with the wage delays weighing heavily on them, the directors were stubbornly reluctant to display optimism. It will take time for the delimitation of authority with the center to bring about the promised benefits, if any. The directors are also wary of Rossel's statements, always made in unison with the federal authorities, about the need to revise the results of privatization for the benefit of enterprises.

This is what Eduard Yalamov, general director of the Urals Optical and Mechanical Plant, said: "The edict on wages is a feeble attempt to treat a symptom. It will fizzle out in a month or two. There is no doubt about it. The reason is that the edict does not eliminate the root cause of nonpayments. The root cause is the tax system and the fleecing that has been legalized, but no one wants to address this problem. There is highbrow analyzing going on, discussions. "Russian taxes" here — "Yakut-Sakha taxes" there. All this fleecing has been exacerbated by a schedule of payments that is drawn up any old way. And the Jesuitical advance payments!

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They have gone as far as saying that even the road tax must be paid in advance. What does this mean!?"

During the exchange of views the industrialists made it explicitly clear to the governor that demanding any backing from directors in such difficult conditions would be absolutely unreasonable.

Here is another view. Eduard Batyushev, general director of "Uraltransgaz," an affiliate of the "Gazprom" Russian joint-stock company: "Presently the director corps has no arguments that would carry any authority with workers collectives. Nor will we have any unless Boris Nikolayevich takes decisive steps shortly aimed at stabilizing the financial situation, softening the tax policy, and, as a consequence, paying wages on time." Furthermore, Viktor Korovin, general director of "Uralmash," who was handed a no-confidence vote by his workers collective at a closed-door conference the other day owing to the plant's woeful state (wages have not been paid for four months, a number of main production lines are standing idle) nearly shouted that the president would by no means be reelected unless he stops the Chechnya war.

Russia: Urals Electorate Seen Unlikely To Support Yeltsin

MM1402173496 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Pashkov: "Fellow Countrymen Greet the President with Bread and Salt, Unpaid Bills, Chechnya..."]

[FBIS Translated Text] The fences have not been painted green in Yekaterinburg in expectation of the Russian president's visit, but a certain nervousness has been perceived: Traffic jams have formed in the streets because the police have been rehearsing the journey of the presidential convoy, the streets have been intensively cleared of snow, and in the URALSKIY RABOCHIY publishing house, where Yeltsin's meeting with the press was originally planned, for some reason the doors were being urgently changed and everything was being spruced up. Later it was evidently decided that the building was not suitable for the visit, and the old doors were put back.

However, the outward polish, which people have become accustomed to during visits by important personages, was not as visible as the desire of the local authorities to consolidate society around the idea of electing the outgoing president for a new term. A succession of meetings which used to be called party-economic aktivs have been held under the banner of this idea. In any event, at his meeting with the directors of the city's leading industrial enterprises Governor Rossel called on the directors to support Boris Yeltsin for a new term.

"I believe," Eduard Rossel said, "that there is simply no alternative to the current president. An adjustment of the present line is necessary, as I have often said to Boris Nikolayevich, but only Yeltsin is capable of resolving the complex issues."

However, clearly no solidarity was expressed with the governor's views. The first director to speak said that he used to support the president but would not do so today because taxes and officials had stifled production and free enterprise with Yeltsin's full connivance. The view was also expressed that the present government is operating in such a way that if the Communists win the presidential election they will not have to change anything radically, because there is already excessive centralization of ownership and funds.

Many directors were silent but, judging by the conversations in the corridors, the majority agree that the mistakes recently made in the economy could lead to the loss of everthing positive achieved in the past few years, which have been so difficult for everyone.

"A works meeting held a few days ago at the plant showed that people's patience has reached its limit," Uralmash General Director Viktor Korovin told me. "The people are beginning to look actively for someone to blame, and in this atmosphere it is entirely likely that extremist forces will come to power."

According to Korovin, it will not be the directors who will elect the president, but the people. Against the backdrop of coffins constantly arriving in the oblast from Chechnya and the fact that the electorate is made up of the relatives, friends, and acquaintances of every dead man, they are hardly going to support the idea of electing Yeltsin for a second term.

Indeed, against the backdrop of the Urals inhabitants killed in Chechnya, the overflowing hospitals, the enormous unpaid bills, and the nonpayment of wages, many public movements in the Urals which earlier supported the policies of their countryman are changing their minds. Whereas in 1993 the Communists obtained 5.77 percent of the votes in the oblast, in 1995 the figure was 13.8. This is not many, but the trend is striking.

However, there is no point in being hasty with conclusions. We will wait and see what the president has to say, what he is taking to the election (if he is going to run), and what ways he will offer society of solving the problems that have built up. And what he hears in response from his fellow countrymen.

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Russia: Patriotic Union Vernost Criticizes Yeltsin

964F1036B Irkutsk RUSSKIY VOSTOK in Russian No. 3, Feb 96 p 1

[Address from the Russian National Patriotic Union "Vernost" to its compatriots and the authorities: "Yeltsin Means GULAG!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ever since B.N. Yeltsin became president of the RSFSR, our country has seen increased mass encroachment on the rights of the individual and peoples and the homeland of the Russian people, and great Russia-USSR has been willfully destroyed. The government's genocide against its own people has been unprecedented in world history, and to continue it for a couple more years will lead to irreversible destruction of the nation and the entire system of life support and defense for the country.

Understanding that the people will not forgive such betrayal of themselves and the memory of their ancestors, who over the millennia through great toil and deprivation created the powerful state, the present rulers are doing everything possible to remain in power and thus put off the hour of atonement.

This was also manifested before the elections to the State Duma last year when the president, the prime minister, and the local administrators, including in Irkutsk Oblast, campaigned for the government bloc and against competitors, using as a sop to the voters the possibility of manipulating budget funds. But this did not help them, the people supported the opposition.

Understanding that bribes, gifts, and promises are not very effective, they have given the command for terror, that is, intimidation of the voters. From intimidation with the prospect that criminal capitalists will unleash a violent civil war, highly placed bureaucrats have begun to carry out its first, "cold" stage—administrative terror in the localities.

Teams are coming from the Moscow ministry to ensure mass collection at any price of signatures in support of the nomination of B.N. Yeltsin as candidate for president. Reports are coming from various subdivisions of the East Siberian Railroad that superiors are forcing their subordinates to collect signatures under the threat of being fired as well as other punitive actions. People are intimidated to the point of being afraid to use their own names.

Such actions are the grossest violation of the constitutional rights of the citizens, they ultimately undermine confidence in state institutions of power, and they are a demonstration of the contempt in which the regime holds its people as well as its readiness to resort to any lawlessness and violence in order to retain power and turn Russia into another GULAG.

Russia has already been transformed into a den of thieves, and our rulers into "godfathers." For them the budget is a "private bank" from which they "nurture" their own people and arrange bloody "slugouts" like in Chechnya while the simple working man does not even receive his miserly wages. For disobeying these administrative "godfathers," the recalcitrant are threatened with death by starvation.

Criminal and bureaucratic impunity and irresponsibility are running the show in the country, and the procuracy and the courts share their liberal ways with unchecked administrators.

On behalf of the many millions in the Russian national-patriotic movement, we warn bureaucrats of all ranks, from the president and prime minister to local administrators, of the heavy responsibility they bear for betrayal of the Russian people and their attempt through hot and cold administrative terror to suppress the will to resist. But, trampling on the laws and the concepts of justice and honesty, they are thus untying the people's hands for responsive self-protective actions.

Russian people! Citizens and patriots of Russia!

Today destruction, death, and war are coming not from the Communists and national patriots, as the powers that be falsely tell us, but from the highest state official and his henchmen in the local areas, who have sold out and betrayed the nation and the state. We call you to national and civil unification and resistance to the antipopular pro-American regime.

Not a single vote in support of Yeltsin!

When this address is received by law enforcement agencies and representative agencies of power, we request that it be considered an official statement of violation of human rights and voters rights of citizens and of the Constitution of Russian Federation on the territory of Irkutsk Oblast in the form of compulsory gathering of signatures in support of the candidacy of B.N. Yeltsin.

[Signed] Chairman of the RNPS "Vernost" A.S. Turik

[Signed] Political Secretary A.S. Novikov
Novosibirsk, 29 January 1996

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Russia: Chernomyrdin on Economy During Visit to Gas Pipeline

LD1402151496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 14 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin cut short his vacation in Sochi and flew to the Black Sea village of Nebug near Tuapse at the invitation of the gas industry workers. [Passage omitted].

[Begin Chernomyrdin recording] There are different sources. First of all it is the functioning of the whole national economy. Profit. At present Kadannikov, my first deputy, will do everything to work on the profit part, I mean the profit part of the budget. [end recording]

Answering a question about the influence of the forthcoming presidential elections on the Russian economy the premier stressed:

[Begin Chernomyrdin recording] For us, for the Russian economy, the more so at the present situation, it is, of course, a serious test. It is precisely a test for the course of reforms — we have adopted a law on this year's budget. And the main thing now is to implement this law in every point, both in the profit part, and especially in the expenditure part. One can spend witout counting [poyti vraznos], one can make some easy, attractive compromises. That would be very simple. We did not do this before the December elections, and everything that was planned must be fulfilled, and all that we said, that we promised, must be done. [end recording]

Russia: Far East TU Chair Warns Grachev of 'Social Explosion'

MM1502093196 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 1

[Letter from V. Shirin, chairman of the Joint Trade Union Committee of Maritime Kray Garrisons, to Defense Minister P. Grachev: "You Will Get an Explosion. You Have Only Yourself To Blame" — first paragraph is introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] P. Grachev, minister of defense, has never replied to a letter from workers. The editorial office is obliged to make it public.

We bring it to your notice that a plenum of the Joint Trade Union Committee of Maritime Kray Ground Forces was held 21 December 1995 with this agenda: "On the unsatisfactory socioeconomic position of Maritime Kray Ground Forces civilian personnel."

This question was examined at local insistence and was occasioned by the really extremely calamitous position of workers and employees of labor collectives and by the sharp growth of unhealthy sentiments in them.

All working people — primarily furnace-men — are in a particularly bad way, on the verge of a social explosion. People have not received their wages since September, and tax arrears are growing rapidly. The tank repair plant is idle. Practically all workers are on enforced leave.

Despite the fact that the production year ended successfully and the troops were provided with potatoes, meat, and milk, families on Military Sovkhoz No. 24 (Troitskoye village, Khankayskiy Rayon) are on starvation rations. The sovkhoz workers naturally ask this question: "How long will this continue?"

Repeated appeals to the Ministry of Defense for the payment at least of wages meet with silence or formal replies: "No money." Military district officials merely shrug. Do our signals reach the persons on whom the positive resolution of the question depends?

If this state of affairs continues, the consequences will be unpredictable. Why did leaders, including the head of government, declare at the top of their voice in speeches on the eve of the elections that there were no debts to the Ministry of Defense?

You will get an explosion of people's indignation. Then you will have only yourself to blame.

[Signed] V. Shirin, chairman of the Joint Trade Union Committee of Maritime Kray Garrisons.

Russia: Moscow Metro Takes Precautions Against Terrorism

MK1502062396 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Preparations Have Begun for Terrorist Acts in the Moscow Metro"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Special explosion-protection chambers will soon appear in the Moscow Metro.

According to MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS sources, the Metro authorities are hoping to use such devices to prevent possible terrorist acts in the Metro. The chamber itself is an armored 80 x 80 [cm] container similar to a regular safe. It is capable of withstanding an explosion of up to 400 grams of TNT. If a suspicious object is found on the platform or in a car which suggests an explosive device, it will be immediately placed into such a chamber, where the mysterious find can be studied without particular risk to life.

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The first 50 such chambers will be installed at the busiest stations of the Moscow Metro directly on the platform. The danger that curious passengers will try to steal the camera is ruled out almost completely: Each chamber weighs nearly 700 kilograms.

Russia: Belgorod FSB Antiterrorist Exercise Ends in Fiasco

MM1402151996 Moscow TRUD in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Olga Kitova: "The 'Terrorist' Was Not Even Being Sought"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgorod Oblast — Everyone was stunned by the results of a check carried out by local Federal Security Service [FSB] staffers to assess the level of protection of a rayon center. Operating in broad daylight and making no attempt to conceal himself a "terrorist" "mined" all the vital services facilities in Alekseyevka, a town of 40,000 people, in just a couple of hours! He planted between five and seven "explosive devices" each at industrial installations, the oil depot, and in the power system and a large proportion of them were not even disguised. At one enterprise alone a fitter stumbled across a box marked "mine" and went away without telling anybody. He thought it was a joke.

As we can see, even the bloody tragedies of Budennovsk and Kizlyar have taught us nothing. What about the professionalism of the police? When "the terrorist" was "turned in" to them they were not even looking for him!

Russia: Black Sea Fleet Breakup Now 'Complete'

MM1402132796 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0800 GMT 8 Feb 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast: Announcer-read report over video of Black Sea fleet]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer to camera and over video of Black Sea Fleet ships] According to some members of the Fleet Command, the breakup of the Black Sea Fleet can now be viewed as complete. According to their information, the fleet has been reduced by 780 structural units between 1993 and 1996, and its munition reserves by 8,200 items.

As a result what is left of the Black Sea Fleet is not even a squadron of motley forces, Black Sea Fleet Chief of Staff Petr Svyatashov has said in a report to the Russian Ministry's Navy Military Council.

According to other representatives of the Fleet Command, control in the Black Sea Fleet's zone of responsibility has been completely lost. This has resulted in a great influx of contraband and drugs into the Crimea from the Caucasian coast. [video shows various views of Black Sea ships, Svyatashov addressing an audience, closeups of a submarine]

Russia: Proceedings at Tatarstan CP Congress Reported

MM1502123696 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Ravil Khusyainov: "A United Stand"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazan — The Second (Extraordinary) Congress of the Republic of Tatarstan Communist Party has been held in Kazan. It analyzed the results of the elections to the Russian Federation State Duma with regard to Tatarstan and discussed the Republic of Tatarstan presidential elections, due to take place 24 March 1996.

Three deputies representing the republic's Communists got through to the State Duma. Congress delegates said that communist candidates had the edge in the vote in a number of cities, but, as a result of administrations putting pressure on the rural population, this advantage was outweighed by votes for candidates from the Russia Is Our Home bloc.

Delegates also discussed shortcomings in the work of the Communist Party Republic Committee and its First Secretary A. Saliy: Party membership has remained static and few communist managers are being attracted.

The resolution adopted at the congress notes the people's turn toward a revival of the socialist system and Soviet power.

Having discussed the Republic of Tatarstan presidential elections, the congress nominated Ramil Shamilyevich Gabdrakhmanov, director of the Kazan vinegar plant, as candidate for president. He is 35 years old, has a higher education and sufficient experience of economic work, does not belong to any party, but shares the Communists' views. During his relatively short time as director, the plant has overcome its crisis and is now a stable enterprise.

The congress adopted an appeal to all political parties and social organizations and movements in the "Round Table," other political opposition forces in the republic, and all citizens of Tatarstan.

Russia: Norwegian Space Probe Falls to Earth in Urals

LD1402133496 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0100 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A scientific meteorological probe belonging to Norway has fallen to earth on the outskirts of Nizhniy Tagil in the Urals. The Federal

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Security Service in Nizhniy Tagil reported this to INTERFAX-EURASIA on Tuesday.

The sonde's descent was registered by the local unit of the antiaircraft defense troops. According to a report from competent sources, Norwegian representatives apologized to the local authorities and to the antiaircraft defense unit.

The probe did not cause any casualties or damage.

Economic Issues

Russia: Economic Reform Seen Hinging on IMF, Creditor Support

MK1502091996 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Vadim Bardin: "The Day of Reckoning"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the very near future three major events will happen which in some way or other could affect Russia's relations with foreign creditors. On 23 February the president will address the Federal Assembly with an annual message, in the course of which he will apparently seek to convince creditors that Russian economic reform is proceeding in line with IMF recommendations. At approximately the same time IMF head Michel Camdessus will arrive in Moscow, who the Russian authorities are hoping will agree in principle to extend a $9 billion credit. In mid-March Russian debt rescheduling is expected to be finalized by the London Club. In effect, the immediate future of the Russian economy hinges on whether Moscow will manage to enlist the support of the IMF and creditor clubs.

Whether some people like it or not, Russia's economic policy should be geared to Western bankers. And not just because in the perennial Russian dispute between Slavophiles and Westernizers, victory was scored by the latter. In effect there is no choice. The alternative is the full repayment of incurred debts, amounting to tens of billions of dollars per year. True, to be quite accurate, the infeasibility of this alternative is obvious to everybody, and if so, not only the debtor depends on the creditor, but vice versa. A compromise being inevitable, its actual form could vary, and naturally the struggle proceeds around the choice of a concrete compromise option. In this process the creditors orient themselves toward the IMF. Therefore, it is not so much the volume of the expected credit to Moscow that is important ($9 billion for three years) as the very fact of its being provided.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the presidential message will also be targeted at Western creditors. It is rather difficult to convince them that Russian economic reform continues in line with IMF prescriptions. At any rate, Yusiki Kharichuga [name as transliterated], the IMF's comptroller in Russia, accurately records all slipups, from the failure to live up to the promise contained in a recent memorandum to abolish export tariffs, to increased protectionism, to the danger of lapsing into preelection populist policies. So far, Anatoliy Chubays told the "Itogi" TV program, the social spending decisions made have fit into the budget, but there is a growing possibility of a return to inflationary financing of government spending. Even so, Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin believes that the extension of a new credit to Russia has been effectively coordinated at the expert level. The IMF's underlying assumption must be that it is more beneficial for its creditors to keep their hand on the pulse of the Russian economy than to wash their hands in the face of mounting political risks.

The impression is that the policy pursued by the IMF and the creditor clubs with respect to Russia is marked by a certain division of labor. Amid fanfare, the IMF agrees to extend Russia $3 billion a year. The London Club, with utmost reluctance, accepts the Russian debt rescheduling model, but the Paris Club puts everything on hold, and the servicing of the state foreign debt hangs over the Russian Government like the sword of Damocles. And although the IMF credit will become Moscow's bargaining chip at negotiations with the intransigent club, there is no confidence yet that Paris will follow London.

So success at the negotiations with the London Club is a major achievement of Russian foreign economic policy. In November 1995 a framework agreement was signed on a 25-year debt rescheduling ($32.5 billion), which envisions a seven-year grace period, during which time Russia will pay only part of the interest due. Deputy Finance Minister Mikhail Kasyanov believes that everything will be finally coordinated by mid-March. The government is making intensive preparations for that: On 7 February a special decree was adopted on settling the debt to the London Club, whereby the Finance Ministry is to provide the Bank of England a Russian Government guarantee on the payment by Vneshekonombank of commissions involved in the opening and servicing of a trustee account. The sum of payments to the London Club was also revealed — $1.5 billion, which will be made after the debts are verified with each creditor and the corresponding paperwork is completed. Thus, the London Club has additional guarantees: Payments are made by Vneshekonombank, but money is transferred to the trustee management of the Bank of England, which makes settlements with the creditors. It is noteworthy that the interests of Russia and the Bank of England coincide in that there should be no haste in

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making final payment transfers to creditors. True, this interest is reflected in the sum of commissions, which is not being divulged.

Russia: Government Approves Agricultural Program

LD1502120296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1059 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 15 (INTERFAX) — The Russian government session chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets Thursday approved the draft program for stabilization and development of the Russian agricultural complex in 1996-2000.

Vladimir Shcherbak, Deputy Agriculture and Food Products Minister, told the session that stabilization of production in the agricultural-industrial complex is to be ensured in 1996-1997 in line with the program. Annual growth of agricultural production by 2 to 4 percent is to be reached in 1998-2000.

According to the program, production of grain by 2000 is to reach 95 million tonnes, of sugar-beet — 27 million tonnes, potato — 38 million tones, milk — 44.6 million tonnes. Agricultural requirements in mineral fertilizers will be 12 million tonnes by 2000, pesticides — 200,000 tonnes. There should be not less than 2.6 million tractors and 500,000 harvesting combines in the agricultural complex by 2000.

The steady development of the agricultural complex must be ensured by introduction of energy-saving technologies. It is planned to surmount the recession and to increase production of meat up to 2.5 million tonnes a year, sugar — 2.5 million tonnes by 2000. Russia must produce 4.2 million tonnes of fish and sea products by 2000, while manufacturing of food products made of fish is to reach 2.6 million tonnes.

No precise concept of agricultural development for the long term has existed, Soskovets said. "Government opponents take advantage of this and affirm that the Cabinet of Ministers has no strategy to develop the agrarian complex," he said.

The Agriculture Ministry is to introduce changes and amendments in the program in line with Soskovets' instruction. In particular, it will make more concrete the issue on protection of domestic producers, to finalize measures to surmount industrial recession. The major burden should be placed not on federal but on local power bodies and on goods producers themselves.

Russia: Kadannikov Counsels Against Import Restrictions

MM1402140296 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Sergey Milyanchikov: "Government: Latest Russian Federation Government Session Was Devoted to How To Protect National Commodity Producer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The series of measures submitted by the Ministry of the Economy boiled down to traditional measures to galvanize exports of Russian manufacturers' output and to nontariff means of regulating imports with a view to cutting them by 30 percent, along with expanding the proportion of national output on the domestic market (it now represents less than half), increasing investment, and boosting the population's effective demand.

Customers must have money in order to buy output, therefore it is primarily necessary to pay debts and pay wages promptly. It was suggested that state control over the payment of wages to hired workers in the nonstate sector of the economy be restored and "unwarranted increases in enterprise leaders' personal incomes compared with hired workers' incomes" ruled out.

As for the regulation of imports, it is currently inadvisable to raise tariff rates for imported commodities. As Economy Minister Yevgeniy Yasin said, the average rate is now 14 percent. Nontariff methods of regulation, in particular the imposition of quotas on imports of certain commodities — textiles, alcohol, and tobacco — and the certification of imported output, may have a greater effect.

The Ministry of the Economy has suggested increasing the proportion of long-term commitments [investitsii] in capital investment [kapvlozheniya]. In order to set the economy "on the road to steady growth" this figure should be 3 percent in 1996, 5 percent in 1998, and 7 percent in the year 2000.

By way of argument the director of a sewn goods factory presented samples of his output to the government session. He said: We can manufacture consumer goods that are just as good as those abroad.

The discussion would have most likely ended on that note and the draft would have been adopted had there not been an objection from [First Vice Premier] Vladimir Kadannikov, who was himself a national producer until a few weeks ago. He voiced the view that aid and investment must be channeled into specific sectors that the state intends to develop. As for import restrictions, according to Kadannikov, the measures that have been suggested to the government represent an

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attempt to close our market to foreign commodities, giving national producers a monopoly to dominate that market without concern for quality. The upshot was that it was decided to dispatch the main areas for finalization, and a working group has been set up to that end led by the first vice premier.

Russia: Expert Discusses State of Russian Economy

MK1402143496 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Yuliya Latynina: "Foreign Experts in the Government View Populism as 'Uncertainty' Factor"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, Richard Layard, expert of the Russian-European Center of Economic Policy, introduced to the public a monthly review of the Russian economy. Mr. Layard noted the uncertainty of the future economic course, on one hand, and stability of Russia's main financial markets, on the other. The uncertainty results from the replacement of Mr. Chubays with Mr. Kadannikov and from the president's edict on the appropriation of 16.2 trillion rubles and $1 million for the rebuilding of Chechnya; the Duma decision on raising the minimum pension and minimum wage; the appropriation of three billion rubles for the striking miners, and other hard-to-fulfill promises of the government.

The populist impulses are not going to necessarily result in inflation: The deficit can be covered by issuing more state short-term bonds. The only condition being that the bonds should be bought by Russians or foreigners, rather than by the Central Bank with new rubles. "We are expecting a strong pressure brought to bear on the Central Bank in a bid to make it buy the yet unbought bonds," Mr. Layard said, noting, however, that it would be rather easy for Sergey Dubinin to counter this pressure with support from the president.

Additional complications are attributable to the Duma's threats to revise the results of privatization, as well as to the possible imposition of import quotas and tariffs attended by the lowering of export tariffs. "If protectionist measures are inevitable," Mr. Layard pointed out, "tariffs are more preferable than quotas."

Russia: Federal Program To Revive Engineering Industry

MM1402133296 Moscow TRUD in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 1

[Report by Ivan Rusin: "Will We Get Back Into the World Market?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian government is going to help the machine-building industry to retrieve its lost position in world markets. This is the task that the elaborators of the Federal Program for the Development of Machine-Building Output, which has been discussed by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and leading exporters and economists, have set themselves.

The Russian machine-building industry is reducing its production, since it cannot sell its output either on the domestic market or abroad. In the space of five years exports have fallen by a factor of eight. And this is despite the fact that many of our traditional foreign customers are establishing new plants and factories and are spending millions of dollars on modernizing old plants. So why is Russia being left out in the cold?

The federal program envisages the producers and the government working in closer contact. The state is promising to protect our leading companies' projects. The formation of an insurance system, which will reduce the Russian side's economic risk, has already begun.

Russia: 'Routine Indexation' Increase for Rail Freight

MM1402140596 Moscow TRUD in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 2

[Biznes-TASS report: "Rail Fares Up Again"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 10 February the Russian Federation Rail Ministry raised charges for freight shipments on all types of Russian railroads, including international routes, by up to 3.3 percent

The increase in charges is viewed as a routine indexation designed to ensure the sector's normal functioning. With virtually no budget support in 1994-1995, the Railway Ministry believes that it was only the corresponding indexation of freight charges that ensured rail transport operations. At the same time freight charges made it possible to subsidize socially important passenger routes.

As a result of the "freezing" of freight charges in October-December 1995 the sector went into the red. According to Rail Ministry specialists' estimates, losses were 134 billion rubles in December 1995.

Russia: Committee Head Goes to Africa Despite Investigation

MK1502101396 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 13 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Igor Malov: "Chairman of the Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones, Who Is Under Investigation, Has Left for Namibia. Yevgeniy Bychkov: The Committee and I Have Acted

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in the Interests of the State" — article includes interview with Yevgeniy Bychkov by unidentified journalists at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport on 12 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yevgeniy Bychkov, chairman of the Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones, who a few days ago signed a statement agreeing not to leave in connection with a criminal case initiated against him, left Russia early in the morning of 12 February. He has gone on a trip to Namibia and Botswana to hold negotiations with leaders of these countries, in the course of which relations between diamond-producing countries and the management of De Beers is expected to be discussed. It will be recalled that at present Russia sells over 90 percent of its uncut diamonds through De Beers. The agreement with De Beers, however, expired last December. The Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones took a rather tough stand in the negotiations. According to estimates made by some experts from the Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones, De Beers, being a middleman between diamond-producing states and the cutting industry, has been earning some $250-300 million per year from its contract with Russia. At the same time, the capacities of the Russian cutting industry are underutilized.

Some days ago a search was conducted at the office of the Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones, the head of which was officially charged in a case initiated as long ago as in 1994, in which he has all along been regarded as a witness. This case concerns a deal between "Zvezda Urala" [Urals Star], an affiliate of the Russian Committee on Precious Metals and Precious Stones, and Golden ADA, a U.S. company, which has never been concluded. In accordance with the deal, the U.S. side was to cut a considerable number of Russian diamonds and sell them on the international market as cut stones. A controversy over the incompatibility of raw (uncut) diamonds with the quality standards envisioned under the contract, however, upset the deal; but the U.S. side has not yet returned either the raw diamonds or its cost. The difficulty is that it has not yet been established whether the diamonds the Americans are giving back are the ones delivered by Russia. Incidentally, boxes containing the first lot of diamonds returned after the deal was frustrated have not yet been opened. As for the approximate cost of the deal, its worth is not less than $100 million.

After such a detective-like story, Bychkov's departure from the country was quite unexpected. Before leaving, at Vnukovo Airport, Yevgeniy Bychkov answered questions from several reporters, who managed to "calculate" his special flight.

[Reporter] What are you personally being accused of?

[Bychkov] I am being accused of abuse of my official status and the violation of the currency regulation law.

[Reporter] Do you agree with these accusations?

[Bychkov] No, I do not. I think that the committee and I have acted in the interests of the state. We wanted to create in the United States a base for selling our final products, cut diamonds; we wanted to open a credit line, but our U.S. partners simply duped us.

[Reporter] In that case, with whose consent did you act?

[Bychkov] In that case we acted with the consent of Boris Fedorov, deputy chairman of the government. After all, we do not make such decisions on our own.

[Reporter] Is the rumor that your troubles have been caused by the intrigues of De Beers true?

[Bychkov] I cannot say whose intrigues these are, but evidently someone does not like the committee's policy, which is aimed at the observance of Russia's interests. As for the negotiations with De Beers, we have agreed not to comment on them until they are finished. I can only say that Russia will not sign any agreement which undermines its interests.

[Reporter] Will what has happened to you affect the negotiations with De Beers in any way?

[Bychkov] No, it will not.

[Reporter] Does the prosecutor's office have nothing against your trip?

[Bychkov] No, they permitted me to go on this trip. There have been no objections.

[Reporter] What is the aim of your trip?

[Bychkov] We are going on a study tour. It will be interesting for us to talk with the leaders of these countries about the world diamond market as a whole. The trip will last one week. We are going to exchange opinions.

[Reporter] Do you expect any massive sales of reserves of the State Depository of Valuables so as to back social programs under edicts that have been signed recently?

[Bychkov] No, to my mind there should not and will not be any massive sales, because all goods sold from the state fund are, so to speak, of a delicate kind. In addition, the market is so tight that any change on the market will lead to grave consequences. We have already experienced this with respect to aluminum, copper, and platinum.

According to the General Prosecutor's Office, Yevgeniy Bychkov, who signed an agreement not to leave, had to receive special permission for his business trip from an investigator. People in Namibia, however, do not seem to be upset by the small addition to Mr. Bychkov's official status.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Official on Country's Goals, NATO Expansion

AU1302213196 Kiev DEMOKRATYCHNA UKRAYINA in Ukrainian 3 Feb 96 pp 1, 2

[Article by Volodymyr Horbulin, Secretary of the Presidential National Security Council and Ukrainian presidential adviser for national security issues: "Ukraine Must 'Return' to Europe"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As a young sovereign state, Ukraine certainly strives to establish itself in the new geopolitical environment. In our opinion, the formation of this environment proceeds under the influence of two opposite processes — disintegration and decentralization of the totalitarian system that existed "to the east of the Berlin Wall," on the one hand, and integration process under way in western European countries and the process of central and eastern European countries joining existing, but transformed European regional institutions, on the other.

In this situation, those young states, which do not yet have sufficient experience of their own statehood, find themselves in a quandary. They have to tackle difficult questions of setting priorities in their external policies and learn how to accept assistance from other countries with dignity or turn it down categorically, if it does not conform to their own national interests. Because, despite formal cancellation of all obstacles on the road toward European integration, many of these obstacles — both political-economic and purely psychological — are still there.

For Ukraine, contemporary Europe presents strategic interest. The values of the development of education, religion, and art in Ukraine are inseparable from the development of the European cultural tradition.

Obviously, for Europe too, Ukraine presents direct interest as a large consumer market, a source of relatively cheap skilled manpower, and a country with an interesting scientific and technological potential of institutes and enterprises that have embarked upon the road toward conversion.

We are well aware of the fact that specific forms and character of the process of rapprochement with Europe will be directly dependent upon the extent to which Ukrainian society will be able to overcome the consequences of posttotalitarianism both in social consciousness and in the economy and policy. Such aspirations are expressed in concentrated form in the idea of stable social development. For us, precisely this idea is fundamental in forming the concept of social transformations and national security.

After the fate of nuclear weapons in Ukraine has been finally decided, one can say that the specific stage of the "cold stare" on Ukraine on the part of Europe has ended. The stage of "cooperation and gradual approach to integration" has started. Time will show how successful it is going to be.

Unfortunately, the process of disintegration has prevailed in central and eastern Europe over the last four years. We believe that it is necessary to halt it and emerge on the new level of subregional cooperation. Unless a proper democratic solution to this problem is found on the paths of economic and political rapprochement, both within central and eastern Europe and on the continent as a whole, the role of "integrator" may be assumed by totalitarian antidemocratic forces, whose goal is to restore the geopolitical imperialist structure that used to exist on the territory from the "Berlin Wall" to the Kurile Islands. It is clear that in such a structure there is no room for new independent and democratic states and, therefore, no room for independent Ukraine.

I want to remark that practically every country of central and eastern Europe would readily allow itself to become "involved" in the integration process of the "Maastricht type." However, the true fact is that the western European "common home" is in no hurry "to open its doors" to their eastern European neighbors, and we understand this. The countries of central and eastern Europe, including Ukraine, need certain adaptation stages that would testify to the viability of the new economic and political structures and would show their aptitude and capability for integration.

In strategic dimensions, Ukraine, after it proclaimed its independence in 1991, entered a transitional period of its development. Its characteristic feature is struggle between the old, which is dying out, and the new, which is coming into being.

The most conspicuous positive changes have taken place in the sphere of nation building. Over a short period of time, Ukraine has created the main state attributes and has been recognized by the world. A Constitutional Agreement has been signed between the president and the Supreme Council on the division of powers between the executive and legislative branches of power. Ukraine's prestige as a member of many universal international organizations in whose founding it took part (the United Nations, UNESCO, and others) is growing. Our state has also been admitted to a number of other international organizations, in particular, the IMF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Ukrainian state has become an equal member of the Organization for Security and Development in Europe (OSCE) and signed documents

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on cooperation and partnership with the EU, NATO, and the Western European Union (WEU).

Ukraine put in much effort to become an equal member of the Council of Europe (CE) — an influential international regional organization. This event, which was a historic one for our state, took place on 9 November 1995, when the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe legally approved the decision by the CE Parliamentary Assembly on Ukraine's admission to that prestigious international organization. That event became an act of legal recognition of Ukraine's authority and its right to join all European structures. This has created a new political situation on the continent and has given Ukraine a chance to intensify its democratic transformations.

We hope that the Council of Europe will grant Ukraine assistance in bringing its national legislation in line with European standards and in drafting the Civil Procedural, Administrative, and Administrative-Procedural codes, and this will be a weighty contribution to the formation of a legal foundation in our state. The Council of Europe is also ready to help us in adjusting the mechanism of activity of Ukraine's Constitutional Court, and it will render us legal and technical assistance in working out a new Ukrainian constitution and in creating an independent judicial system.

The membership of the Council of Europe must also bring perceptible economic benefits — from promoting economic reforms to protecting computer communications and granting certain benefits in the trade and economic sphere, in particular, preferential attitude to Ukraine in resolving antidumping problems, in joining the GATT system, and so on. Ukraine's long-term goal is to become an equal member of the EU and also of other European structures, in other words, to join as an equal member the economic and political area of contemporary Western civilization. In its medium-range plans, Ukraine strives to create a zone of free trade with the EU and hopes to be granted associated membership of that union. Already signed are the Accord on Partnership and Cooperation and a tentative trade accord. In 1998, negotiations will be held on creating a free trade zone between the EU and Ukraine. I will point out at this point that we have already specified main parameters of the State Concept for the development of relations between Ukraine and the EU and its members.

We regard accelerated economic transformation precisely on market principles as the main precondition and way for emerging from the current crisis and for achieving economic stabilization and Ukraine's gradual entry into the European economic area. It is precisely this approach that underlies the new program for the government activity that was approved by the Supreme Council on 11 October 1995. Transformations in ownership relations is the core of economic reforms. A demonopolization of production and purpose-oriented privatization of state property will create the necessary conditions for shaping a competitive market environment. Tasks of overcoming the crisis of nonpayments and liberalizing taxes, prices, and external political activity are among the organic components of the new course of the socioeconomic activity. All of this must emancipate the producer and, together with a reform in wages, create an effective motivation for productive labor. We attach great importance to the land reform, which must become a foundation for radical restructuring of the entire system of production relations in rural regions. Private ownership of land will be a prevailing basis for agrarian transformations.

We consider, among our main tasks, the creation in Ukraine of most favorable conditions for investments through curbing inflation, stabilizing the entire finance and credits system, and achieving social consensus. Intensification of the investment process depends, primarily, on our ability to make effective use of our domestic resources. Yet, we will also appreciate foreign investment credits granted on favorable terms.

Furthermore. It is necessary to point out that an overwhelming majority of factors of the economic crisis are associated, to one degree or another, with the aftermath of the USSR disintegration: The disruption of old economic ties, the disintegration of the single ruble zone, habitual preference for traditional markets of raw materials and sales of goods, as well as territorial, border, and ethnic problems, and so on. That is why slogans in favor of a "renewed Union" on the territory of the CIS, "rebuilding of the USSR," and even "union with Russia" are getting a certain support in the social consciousness of the population in some Ukrainian regions as the only way for our state to emerge from the crisis.

These moods also exist in other CIS countries and are often taken advantage of by certain leaders to speed up the process of turning the Commonwealth into a new integration association with distinct suprastate institutions and control and command and even coercion functions.

Ukraine is interested in restoring old and establishing new economic ties both with CIS countries, primarily Russia, and advanced Western countries. On the other hand, artificial acceleration of the integration of the still not fully formed market economic structures will lead to restructuring "the single national economic complex" of the former USSR with its characteristic

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organic shortcomings — technological backwardness, hypertrophied centralization, and so on.

I will also mention the following. The Ukrainian state concentrates its external political efforts on creating and building reliable international security mechanisms on bilateral, regional, and global levels. It strives to develop extensive cooperation with other states and international organizations, including military-political ones, with a view to raising predictability, confidence, mutual understanding, partnership and building comprehensive and efficient mechanisms of regional security in Europe.

Ukraine's activity within the framework of the OSCE, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and the North Atlantic Assembly is a priority regional trend of Ukraine's external policy.

It is necessary to give special attention to our state's cooperation with NATO that is promoted by the implementation of the "Partnership for Peace" Program, adopted in Brussels in January 1994, a program, which contains new ideas and forms of cooperation between NATO and eastern European countries, without expanding the organization's structure. Having joined, in February 1994, the "Partnership for Peace" Program, Ukraine thereby confirmed its fundamental political priorities and option in favor of "returning to Europe," from which it had been artificially separated over a long period of time.

"The NATO issue" — the question of expanding the alliance with central and eastern European countries — is a subject of particular attention on the part of leaders of European states, political analysts, and public opinion. From the point of view of interests of Ukraine's national security, it is of fundamental significance in what form this question will be resolved.

As a regional state, in the geopolitical dimension, Ukraine is interested in those processes, which promote the strengthening of regional security. It is in favor of working out an optimal mechanism that new countries may use for joining the alliance: First, this mechanism must be worked out in conditions where there is no direct threat of external military aggression; second, it must not violate the existing balance (although quite conditional) of interests. For example, it remains unclear how this step will affect our country's security in the case when the sphere of NATO responsibility lies in the area along the perimeter of Ukrainian borders; third, it would be unwise to ignore Russia's position.

It goes without saying that the strengthening of every country's own national security by way of joining NATO must not be detrimental to the national security of other countries, including Ukraine. This event, if it does take place, must contribute to strengthening security in central and eastern Europe as a whole.

It is not accidental that I once again return to the system of central European cooperation. There exist many proposals for future Ukraine's political orientations. In fall of 1994, in his speech at the session of the American-Ukrainian Consultative Committee, Mr. Kissinger mentioned three models for Ukraine's external political activity:

1. Integration with Russia;
2. Integration with the West;
3. Free drift with numerous unknowns.

He also said that the third model is the most likely one, without, however, specifying what he meant by "unknowns."

Therefore, one of the two last variants may be considered. However, the signing of an agreement similar to the Austrian one, even though it might make it possible to fill in the "security vacuum," until a clear vision of the general European security structure is worked out, would slow down Ukraine's political and economic integration within European structures.

One of the main postulates of Ukraine's external political course states that, in view of its geopolitical situation, historical experience, cultural traditions, abundant natural resources, and the powerful economic, scientific-technological, and intellectual potential, Ukraine may and must become an influential regional state, capable of playing a major role in guaranteeing political and economic stability in Europe.

Our strategic option is known and specified. Ukraine must "return" to the family of civilized nations of Europe and become its equal member. This is our goal and our destiny.

(The full text of the article will be published in the next issue of the journal POLITYKA I CHAS [Politics and Time]).

Ukraine: Power Supply Problems After Disconnection From Russian Grid

LD1502075496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1945 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Mikhail Melnik and Raisa Stetsyura]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 14 Feb (ITAR-TASS) — Unless the coal supply to Ukrainian power stations is resumed in the next few days, the republic's industry will have to be put on an accident prevention footing so as to ensure the protection of equipment. In the

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past week the generation of electricity in the country dropped by 1.4 million kW and by the end of this year it will drop by another 1.2 million kW. Thermal power stations are operating at 30 percent capacity, ITAR-TASS correspondents were told today at Ukraine's Power Ministry.

The disconnection of the powergrids of Ukraine and Russia has dealt Ukrainian industry's electricity supply an especially painful blow. This was done on the Russian side's insistence because of the electricity transfer from the Russian power grid. After the disconnection of the power grid its frequency fell from 49.5 to 49.12 Herz, as a result of which a criticial situation has arisen - the need for large-scale consumer power cuts and also the complete halting of the power unit of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant under the nuclear power station's safety regulations. In connection with this, the technical personnel and equipment of the nuclear power plant have been put on a state of increased alert.

The power workers are now studying the question of lowering the electricity flow to consumers by 20 percent. The ITAR-TASS correspondent has learned that such an option had already been proposed to Donetsk region as one of those consuming most electricity.

Ukraine: Russian Radio Taken Off Ukrainian Airwaves

964F0995A Simferopol KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 31 Jan 96 p 1

[Article by G. Mikhaylov: "The Beacon's Turn Has Come: It Has Gone Out! Kiev Has Deprived Crimeans of the Opportunity To Watch Russian Television in Its Entirety and Now It Has Jammed a Popular Radio Broadcast From Russia!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is no accident that it is being said that Monday was a black day! In the middle of the day our editorial office and the republic and municipal communications administrations were besieged by a squall of telephone calls from the owners of three-channel cable-radio outlets, who were used to listening regularly to a radio program familiar to everyone from childhood, except for slow-witted infants, "Mayak iz Moskvy" [Beacon From Moscow]. I am certain that after a day or two thousands more reproaches will rain down on the heads of the communications people from the residents of the Crimean interior, whom "Mayak" connected with the Fatherland, from which many have been cut off.

Of course, we took part in the investigation of this incident. But everything turned out to be simple to the point of triteness. Ukraine owed Moscow a lot of money for the "Mayak" broadcasts and the latter, protecting its product, as of 1250 on 29 January 1996 withdrew the program from the Ukrainian airwaves. To the great joy of the head of the Ukrainian Committee on Television and Radio Broadcasting, I believe. So, after 24 hours, ORT broadcasts began spreading little by little and now they have "silenced" "Mayak." What associated with Russian speech is next in line?

We do not doubt that supporters will be found among the Kievan uncles, who will say: The country has no money to build for us a nice, substantial life, but they, supposedly, shed tears with respect to "Mayak" and other trifles. But, unfortunately, our daily hungry, cold, and joyless life is also formed from such "trifles!"

The old popular Odessan anecdote comes to mind. At the end of the twenties, Abramovich is invited to the NKVD [People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs]. A strict interrogator puts a question to him:

"Citizen Abramovich, do you have any gold?"

"What of it?" comes the return question.

"It must be voluntarily turned in to us. We are beginning the construction of a bright future, but we do not have the money for this and, therefore, if you do not want to be sent beyond the Arctic Circle, you had better decide quickly!"

Abramovich, head bowed, left the office. About two minutes pass. There is a knock on the interrogator's door. He opens the door. Before him stands a smiling Abramovich.

"Well then, what have you decided, Citizen Abramovich?" asks the interrogator.

"If you have no money to build a bright future, then it is not necessary to build it at all!"

Postscript

Applying this age-old anecdote to the present-day events involving "Mayak," we want to advise our wealthy liberators once again: If there is no money, then it is not necessary to establish a great, independent state, in which people's rights are infringed!

Ukraine: Relations With Romania Reviewed

WS1502121096 Kiev ZERKALO NEDELI in Russian 3-9 Feb 96 p 5

[Article by Anton Kryukov: "Will the Time for Optimism Come?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some of the problems of Ukrainian- Romanian relations, which last year drew the attention of the press many times, remain unresolved. Judging by everything, for the time being fast

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and immediate progress in those relations cannot be expected. However, the year 1996 will certainly bring some new elements, and we would like to believe that they will bear the "plus" sign.

So far, there are no grounds to claim that, or in any case, there are no outside signs of that. What is more, the end of 1995 was marked by the well-known statement by the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodor Melescanu, which evoked a certain reaction from his Ukrainian counterpart Hennadiy Udovenko. In short, Melescanu did not rule out at a meeting with legislators of his state that Romania may turn to international institutions in case there would be no understanding on Ukraine's part in matter of dispute as far as mutual recognition of the two countries' borders. Udovenko would interpret such a decision, if it were to be made, as overt territorial claims. Accompanied by polemics of a part of the Romanian press close to the radical wing, Ukraine's envoy to Bucharest Oleksandr Chalyy went to Kiev "for consultations."

Based on this, and with reference to "informed sources in the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry," one of the Odessa newspapers has published sensational information about preparations to entirely break off relations with Romania and about corresponding military preparations behind the Prut river [river on Ukrainian-Romanian border]. All we can do is to be happy that the caliber of the newspaper did not correspond with a "projectile," thus we managed to avoid panic in Kiev, as well as in Bucharest; and an increasing pace of purchasing soap, salt, and matches by people of both countries has not been observed.

In short, "it is neither war nor peace, and the army should be disbanded," as comrade Trotskiy used to say sometimes. Nevertheless, there are some grounds for guarded optimism. There are several reasons for that. Primarily, there are no tangible economic grounds for confrontation. Undoubtedly, the disputed territory of the sea shelf — and the problem boils down to it — is of an economic significance, but it is not a vitally important matter for both sides. Second, in objective terms Romania should be interested not only in the existence of an independent Ukraine, but also in maintaining if not "strategic relations of specific partnership," then at least friendly and partner-like relations. One quick glance at the geographic map of East Europe confirms this ("What a great country lies to the East! Is it not Russia?! Just think about it....")

We should not forget about the fact that Ukraine has managed to strengthen its international authority during the recent 18 months. The course toward integration with European structures, which was constantly declared and implemented by Ukraine's state leadership, has been supported and understood by Europe itself, and primarily by closer Western neighbors who are bewitched by the aforementioned geographic phenomenon, too. Given that Bucharest is moving in this direction, and what is more, it is even one body-length ahead, the moment is coming in which unregulated relations with Kiev will more and more hamper this movement.

The psychological factor in the form of the feeling of injustice and resentment which has been developed among the Romanian people for decades does not help normalize relations. The feeling began to mature before Ceausescu, and this process has continued until today. Moreover, after 1989 it even became stronger. There will be presidential elections, as well as parliamentary elections in Romania in the fall. Obviously, a sharp rejection of the former policy is hardly possible. However, I believe that for a skillful politician — and Romania's current President Ion Iliescu undoubtedly is skillful — the election and the electorate's sentiments are not something like [Chechen commanders] Basayev and Raduyev [as published], that is to say something that catches people by the throat and makes them think solely about saving their lives.

Russia's President B. Yeltsin, being the leader of a state which is vitally interested in normal relations with Ukraine, did not very strongly force the establishment of such relations until he decided to prolong his Kremlin mandate (excuse me, registration). When the results of the elections to the State Duma indicated that advocates of the confrontation scenario of developing relations with Ukraine did not enjoy vast support, Yeltsin agreed to sign the general political agreement. Accusations and blackmail were replaced by work. This work is very strenuous, given that Russia's representatives at all levels are striving to obtain concessions for their country and are doing this persistently and smartly. As a matter of fact, this is natural and correct, as long as it is done in a civilized way. At the moment, we can be sure to an essential degree that B. Yeltsin will finally visit Kiev and that an agreement will be signed on 4 April. At one of the final news conferences (or maybe a bit later) Yeltsin will say something to the effect that his policy to a more significant degree facilitates the realistic integration between the two brotherly Slavic nations than the hollering by the Congress of Russian Communities or his other opponents. Those who are interested will try to convey this thesis in a very eligible form to the minds of the masses of electors. As times goes by, one of the arguments used by Yeltsin's opponents (the one dealing with the "crime committed in Belovezhskaya Forest") does not look so convincing as a year ago. Even if Boris Yeltsin goes too far in

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interpreting the integration process, Leonid Kuchma will politely pretend that he did not notice anything, and everyone will be satisfied.

It is hard to provide outlooks for the election situation in Romania, at least due to the fact that to our shame, we know very little about our close neighbor. Nevertheless, I will dare to make a forecast: If Ion Iliescu — proceeding from the objective need to normalize relations with Ukraine — decides to normalize these relations, he will find arguments to persuade both his opponents in the parliament and ordinary electors.

Among the signs in favor of this scenario are reports about the Romanian president's meeting with his diplomats, at which he mentioned further integration into European structures and normalization of relations with Ukraine, among the priority tasks.

In its turn, Ukraine gave the understanding that once Romania abandons its rigid stance on border issues and on the signature of a treaty, this may help initiate the process of delimiting the sea shelf and the economic zones. Talks on that question were conducted back in the former USSR, and the USSR Foreign Ministry was ready to make certain concessions and agreed not to draw on its maps a 12-mile circle around Zmiyinyy Island. The events of late 1980's terminated this process, but the collapse of the Soviet Union revived Romania's hopes. Official Bucharest has lately retreated to its old positions.

However, judging by Ukrainian diplomats' statements, negotiations on the shelf issue may not start without preparations. The Ukrainian side's condition for those kinds of negotiations is signing a general political treaty and by full recognition of the inviolability of existing borders. Moreover, the Supreme Council's foreign policy commission has recommended that the Foreign Ministry should not mention the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in the treaty if the treaty does not include a clause denouncing the occupation of Bessarabia by Romania in 1918, and if it does not mention an agreement between a certain fuhrer [Hitler] and a certain marshal [Antonescu], which allowed the occupation of Ukraine's southern oblasts in 1941. In addition, the Ukrainian diplomats are going to return to those articles of the treaty which concern the situation of ethnic minorities on the territories of the two states.

All those issues are rather sensitive, particularly the denunciation of the 1939 Nonaggression Pact between the USSR and Germany, on which Romanian diplomats insist at every occasion. Besides, Romania reacts very nervously to complaints voiced by certain neighboring states with regard to the situation of ethnic minorities. Therefore, the negotiations will not be easy.

In the immediate future, the Ukrainian side is going to initiate another round of negotiations aimed at signing the treaty. The date of those negotiations has not been yet determined. At the same time, the beginning of the year will be marked by other contacts, too. There are plans to hold the first session of the joint commission for economic cooperation. Prime Ministers Yevhen Marchuk and Nicolae Vacaroiu are going to meet somewhere in southern Ukraine to discuss issues of economic cooperation and sign several important agreements which were ratified a long time ago. Hence, the situation gives grounds for a certain degree of optimism. I would deem this optimism "moderate" and "careful."

Romanian Ambassador to Ukraine Ion Bistreanu, with whom I shared my assessment of the situation, made certain corrections to it, saying that he experienced "pragmatic optimism."

In any case, "optimism" is the key word.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma To Appoint Permanent Envoy to Transdniester

LD1402215696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1915 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Kuchma is drafting a decree to appoint his personal envoy to Transdniester, sources in the presidential staff has said.

Ukrainian First Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Gerashchenko, who is in Chisinau with a working delegation, has confirmed this. "A presidential envoy having the ambassador's rank is to be appointed shortly. The official will stay in Moldova on a permanent basis," Gerashchenko told the deputy speaker of the Moldovan parliament Dumitru Motslan. Gerashchenko hopes that would make Ukraine's participation in efforts to settle the conflict in Transdniester far more effective.

Other sources in the Ukrainian delegation speculate that the current Ukrainian charge d'affairs in Moldova, Yevgeniy Levitsky will be awarded the ambassador's rank and appointed Kuchma's envoy to Transdniester.

The same sources believe that the envoy's rank is a very delicate issue. If the official Ukrainian representative in an autonomy which is juridically part of Moldova has the highest diplomatic rank, "Chisinau is unlikely to respond with enthusiasm to this decision."

In general the sources believe that the appointment of a permanent Ukrainian envoy to Transdniester fits in perfectly with Kiev's efforts to improve consular

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services available to the population of that region, which includes more than 300,000 ethnic Ukrainians.

Ukraine: Cabinet Denies Accepting Senchenko as Crimean Premier

LD1402224696 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1830 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has denied media reports that the Ukrainian Government has accepted the candidacy of Andriy Senchenko for the post of Crimean prime minister.

UNIAN has learned from the press service of the Crimean Cabinet of Ministers that several candidacies, among them that of Senchenko, have been discussed but that so far a final decision has not been adopted.

Ukraine: Spokesman on 'Discrimination' Against Russians in Crimea

LD1402231596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1924 GMT 14 Feb 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Feb 14 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Statements about alleged discrimination against Russians in Crimea by Ukrainian authorities "are bound to provoke protest," Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman Yuriy Sergeyev told a briefing in Kiev Tuesday, commenting on a statement approved by a recent round table in Yalta on problems of Russians in Crimea.

An International Conference of Ukrainian and Russian Parliament Members was held in Yalta last week. It decided to create an interparliamentary assembly of pro-integration forces in the CIS. The Russian delegation was headed by Georgiy Tikhonov, the head of the State Duma Committee for CIS Affairs and Ties with Compatriots.

The participants of the round table held after the conference approved a "Statement on the Problems of Russians in Crimea and of Crimeans Who Regard the Russian Language and Culture as Native." The statement describes as "discriminatory" the policy of Ukrainian authorities towards Russians in Crimea.

According to Sergeyev, such statements "are not just a purposeful distortion of facts but also an interference into Ukraine's internal affairs."

A total of 93 percent of Crimean television and radio programs are broadcast in Russian, and of almost 300 schools in Crimea only one teaches in Ukrainian and another one in the Crimean Tatar language, he said.

Sergeyev also pointed out the fact that "such statements are made when relations between Ukraine and Russia have acquired the form of an active political dialogue."

Ukraine: Electricity Supply 'Dangerously Low' After Russian Cut

WS1502084296 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0219 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Oksana Lyven, "Special to INTELNEWS"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 14 — A coal miners' strike and a harsh winter has plunged Ukraine's power grid to a dangerously low frequency level, prompting the disconnection of most of the country from the power system it shares with Russia, officials announced Wednesday.

The disconnection, which occurred 5:24 p.m. Monday, has set off a new round of concern over Ukraine's fragile energy system, and has already prompted the government to cut electricity to debtors and severely curtail supplies to households.

"Better that a small part is in the dark than the entire country," said Energy Ministry spokesman Ihor Kablak.

Deputy Energy Minister Yuriy Nasedkin said that "the government at the moment is deciding whether to disconnect industrial enterprises by compulsory order or not" but has so far limited itself to calls for energy conservation.

After the disconnection, the Ukrainian energy grid's frequency immediately decreased from 49.5 hertz down to 49.23 Hertz, just above the minimum level required for the safe operation of nuclear power plants, which supply nearly half of the country's electricity.

As of Tuesday morning, according to officials, the Zaporizhiya nuclear power plant, Ukraine's and Europe's largest, was operating at a record 5,264 megawatts in an attempt to make up for the shortage.

Officials say they are ready to shut down the nuclear plants at any time.

Ivan Ivko, Dnipro hydroelectric plant shift manager, said his personnel have never before had to work in such "complicated" conditions.

"Every minute they have to regulate the frequency five or 10 times," he said.

Energy officials cited the two-week-old coal miners' strike, which has reduced the country's thermal generators to 30 percent of normal levels, and insufficient water levels for the country's hydroelectric generation

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complex, as the main causes for the worsening power situation.

Due to peculiarities in the configuration of the power network Russia and Ukraine inherited from the Soviet Union, the Kharkov region, consisting of Kharkov, Sumy and Poltava oblasts, is still using Russian power.

However, officials said the region would be cut off if it exceeds energy consumption limits and announced the cutoff of evening supplies of electricity to both household and commercial consumers.

Ukraine: Chernobyl Will Not Close by 2000

MM1502105096 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Yanina Sokolovskaya: "The Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station Will Most Probably Not Close in the Year 2000"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — An historic document has come into your correspondent's possession. It is the report on Ukraine's real plans regarding the closure of the Chernobyl AES [nuclear electric power station] prepared by Yuriy Kostenko, Ukraine's minister for environmental protection and nuclear safety, for specialists of the European Energy Agency [as published].

For the first time this document clearly reveals the secret that it will not be able to close the Chernobyl AES by the year 2000.

There is much that the Ukrainian side dislikes in the G-7's plans to accelerate the Chernobyl closure and forget Ukraine's radiation problems. Above all this discontent is monetary. "Terminating the operation of the Chernobyl AES as a source of constant profit," the report says, "means the loss of $300 million a year. When the station's remaining planned operating life is taken into account (40 years) the total loss comes to $4-5 billion. This should be the amount of funding guaranteed by the West for the closure of the station."

But the "resources" allocated by the West — mainly credits of $1.8 billion — is completely insufficient for the closure of the Chernobyl AES. It will cost $1-1.5 billion to decommission the no. 1 power unit and reduce it to the state of a "green field." The 10-year program to install power units will cost around another billion. But the West is providing only $498 million for these purposes, "which is completely insufficient not only to finance the program but even to start work." That is what the document says.

It should be noted that the total of Western aid and credits was mentioned in the Memorandum on the Closure of the Chernobyl AES signed by Ukraine and the G-7 quite recently — 20 December last year. Now, however, Ukraine is saying that it is dissatisfied with this document: "The memorandum does not resolve once and for all the questions of compensating the Ukrainian side's losses. The total funding is insufficient. The document is based on the principle of minimum expenditure. Its provisions are not binding because the G-7 is not an entity in international law."

Complaining after the event like this has its reasons. First, Ukraine is really afraid of being left on its own to deal with the problems of the Chernobyl AES. Second, the damaged station has become a "constant source of profit" for Ukraine in the form of Western aid which Ukraine does not want to lose.

Environment Ministry Yuriy Kostikov stated recently: Chernobyl's RBMK-type reactors are safe. They are no different to those that are being used in Russia and Lithuania, but for some reason the West is demanding their closure.

Ukraine plans to haggle over this issue. The sarcophagus of the wrecked power unit is the main bargaining counter. This really is a means of intimidating the G-7. There are around 200 tonnes of nuclear fuel buried within the sarcophagus.

It emerges from the report that Ukraine is not seeking to dispose of the Chernobyl AES by the year 2000 — after all, a plan for the decommissioning of the station has not even been drawn up yet. Furthermore, the G-7 countries have not yet delivered the credits promised for the construction of new nuclear power units at the Khmelnitskiy and Rovno nuclear electric power stations, which are supposed to compensate for the power supplies lost by the closure of the Chernobyl power station.

Ukraine will only consider closing down the Chernobyl power station 30-35 months after receipt of these credits, Minister Kostenko said in conversation with your IZVESTIYA correspondent. He hopes that the station's fate will be decided in Moscow in April during the G-7 leaders' meeting which Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma intends to address.

But for the time being the head of the country's government has outlined the Ukrainian approach to the Chernobyl problem clearest of all: Unless we receive fresh financing for Chernobyl we will be forced to repair it and continue using it.

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Ukraine: TU Officials Cited on Mine Strike

MM1402124196 Moscow TRUD in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Dmitriy Dobrovolskiy: "Confrontation Between Miners and Government"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Trams and buses in Kharkov came to a standstill for several hours because of the energy crisis caused by the miners' strike. The Luganskaya thermal electric station has just 24 hours' stocks of coal, while the Zuyevskaya electric power station has enough fuel left for four days. Regular emergency power cuts to customers are being planned. Against this background the postponement of talks between the strikers and the government is depressing, as are the attempts to play the "miners' card" for political purposes.

People are demanding the payment of colossal debts and firm guarantees for the future. Vice President Yevgeniy Marchuk is refusing to hold talks until the strike is called off. But at thousand-strong rallies in Donetsk, Lugansk, and other Ukrainian mining cities, miners have declared their intention to continue striking.

"In the past five years coal mining has been halved at our enterprise," Sergey Ilyushenko, chairman of the Independent Miners' Union of the Donetsk Gorkiy Mine, said. "When coal prices were fixed our mines were artificially rendered unprofitable. The better we work the deeper our debt becomes."

This policy, Sergey Rybakov, chairman of the Coal Industry Workers Trade Union Committee, said, is aimed at destroying Ukraine's coal industry. That is why our trade unions are staging a joint strike.

The Ukrainian Trade Unions' Central Committee plenum is planning a nationwide action in Ukraine in support of the miners 21 February.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Energy Workers Said in 'Complicated Situation'

LD1402164596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1431 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ZAPOROZHYE, Feb 14 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukraine has recently been taking about 30 million kilowatts/hour of electricity each day from the Russian power supply system, director of the Zaporozhye thermal electric power plant Viktor Polivany told Interfax - Ukraine Tuesday [14 February].

Ukraine's and Russia's power supply systems were disconnected on February 12 at Russia's demand in order to prevent the substantial flow of electric power from the Russian electricity supply system.

Disconnection from Russia's power supply system "has placed Ukraine's energy workers in a complicated situation," Polivany said. "It is necessary to either disconnect consumers from receiving such volume of electricity or to increase generating capacities, which is impossible under present conditions because there is no fuel at thermal electric power plants."

There is only enough coal left at the Zaporozhye thermal electric power plant for five days of work. The leadership "is doing its best" to reach an agreement with the leadership of Pavlogradugol and several directors of mines on a sharp increase of coal supplies to the Zaporozhye power plant.

Ukraine: Large Oil Reserves Found in Sumy Oblast

AU1502092196 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 13 Feb 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The 'Sukhivske' Looks Promising for Gold. Black Gold"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Drill operators of the geological enterprise "Poltavanaftohazheolohiya" [Poltava Oil and Gas Geology] have struck a powerful oil gusher with the daily yield of oil amounting to 70,000 metric tons and 20,000 cubic meters of accompanying gas at the new field "Sukhivske" in Okhtyrka Rayon of Sumy Oblast from the depth of 5,050 meters. By way of comparison, today, the average daily yield per one well, as recorded by the Okhtyrka Oil and Gas Extraction Administration, does not exceed 20,000 tons of oil. In general, geological prospects of the new "Sukhivske" deposit are estimated at 1.5 million tons of oil.

Ukraine: Parliament Modifies Minimum Wage, Pension Increases

WS1502084196 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0219 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Oksana Hasiuk, INTELNEWS Staff Writer]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 14 — Parliament avoided a major confrontation with the government on Wednesday when it agreed to partially defer large increases in minimum wages and pensions.

While the vote raises monthly minimum wages and pensions to KBV1.5 million (less than $8) as of March 1, it excluded state employees — who are paid based upon multiples of the figure —from reaping the benefits.

The Rada had earlier approved a minimum poverty level of KBV4.8 million, a move top government officials

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predicted would lead to a huge deficit increase and a new inflationary spiral. Today's vote also watered down this move by backing off leftist demands that the minimum wage be tied to the poverty level.

Ukraine therefore retains the dubious distinction of having the world's lowest minimum wage at KBV60,000 (about $0.30). Minimum pensions remain fixed at a monthly KBV120,000.

Parliament also decided to establish minimum wages at least once a year as part of the annual budget process, based upon reccommendations from the Cabinet of Ministers. The government, according to the ruling, should present its minimum wage proposals after negotiations with trade unions.

However, st..ting in July, the process will change, with the government being required to review minimum wages quarterly based upon inflation.

Parliament also ordered the government, starting next year, to initate a system of compensation for late payments of wages and pensions.

According to Viktor Pynzenyk, deputy prime minister on Economic Reforms, this provision could not be introduced at the present time, because it would lead to huge expenditures from the budget.

Yuriy Buzduhan, Parliament Social Protection Committee chairman, characterized the decision as "just a gentleman's agreement with government."

Socialist Ivan Chyzh, deputy chairman of the committee, confirmed that Wednesday's decision was coordinated with the government. Chyzh said that while he supported the idea that minimum wages should not be less than the poverty level, he agreed it was unrealistic at this time.

The committee had proposed the establishment of a KBV6.81 million poverty level, including compensation for municipal services for the poor, and KBV5.242 million without such compensation.

But the government proposed instead the gradual introduction of the KBV4.8 million level approved by Parliament in October.

The Cabinet has proposed gradually to make such additional payments for families with children and Chornobyl victims.

Social Protection Minister Arkadiy Yershov said Wednesday that a KBV6.81 million poverty level would cost the state an annual KBV5,037 trillion, which would have to be covered by additional monetary emission.

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Belarus

Belarus: Prime Minister Views 'Problems' With IMF

WS1402154096 Minsk BTK Television Network in Belarusian 1900 GMT 12 Feb 96

[Report by A. Lukashevich and V. Sorkin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The event [12 February conference of trade union leaders in Minsk] was attended by Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir. In his brief speech, the government leader described the economic situation in Belarus to the audience, informing them that the 1996 draft budget reduces the taxation burden by almost 9 percent. Prices for gas and electricity for industry will also be reduced.

As for the situation in the agricultural sector, Mikhail Chyhir said that preparations for spring work are currently under way in the countryside. From the president's reserve fund, $8 million has been earmarked for these purposes. As the prime minister emphasized, however, this aid should become the last, because purchase prices for agricultural products have recently increased. For example, while 1 ton of grain cost $30 in 1994, it currently costs as much as $107. The government leader emphasized that in the immediate future Belarus will not receive assistance from the IMF.

[Begin Chyhir recording in Russian] There are problems with regard to a number of issues in our relations with the IMF. First of all, this relates to the process of privatization. They think it is proceeding slowly in our country. Another problem is our budget for 1996. They would like the budget to be somewhat tougher. There are also other smaller problems which could be resolved after resolving the problems of privatization, the budget, and our monetary policy. The hard currency exchange and our national currency's exchange rate are quite controversial issues, too. Although it is hard to judge who is right or wrong on this matter, frankly speaking, we think that we are correct. [end Chyhir recording] [passage omitted]

Belarus: Lukashenka Says No Soldiers Will Fight Abroad

LD1402205896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, Feb 14 (Interfax-West) — Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka promised on Wednesday [14 February] that no Belarusian soldier would be sent to fight abroad.

"Belarus confirms its desire for peace and will not allow a single Belarusian soldier to fight and be killed in other countries," Lukashenka said in an address issued on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

Belarus "was one of the first to sign CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) agreements on the problems of war participants and members of the families of citizens who died or went missing in local wars or military conflicts."

Despite economic difficulties, "the leadership of the republic will consistently meet its commitments to give individually addressed assistance and support to internationalist soldiers (a Soviet-era cliche for soldiers who served in Afghanistan) and their families," he said.

The Belarusian government has declared February 15 Internationalist Soldiers Day. According to official statistics, about 30,000 Afghan war veterans are living in Belarus today.

Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir on Wednesday received a group of men disabled in the Afghan war; on Thursday he is due to attend a mourning rally in Minsk's suburb of Troytskoye.

Belarus: Lukashenka Dismisses Defense Ministry Officials

LD1402192896 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1700 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of Belarus has signed several decrees ordering a reshuffle in the country's Defense Ministry, the presidential administration press service reports. Under one of the decrees, Viktar Alyaksandravich Nikanaw is dismissed from the posts of chief of the signal troops in the Belarusian Armed Forces and head of the [Defense Ministry] directorate for communications and computerized control systems, and discharged from military service for health reasons. He is replaced by Colonel Alyaksandr Mikhaylavich Sakalow.

Under another decree, Mikhail Stanislavavich Stankevich, deputy minister of defense for armaments, the chief of armaments in the Belarusian Armed Forces, is dismissed and discharged from the army for health reasons. He is replaced by Colonel Pyatr Ivanavich Ragazhewski.

Belarus: Economic Accords With Russia To Be Initialed

WS1402141396 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Bolshakov is expected to arrive in Minsk on 16 February on a working visit, Belarusian Cabinet

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of Ministers told INTERFAX. The visit is planned as part of preparations for an official visit by Belarusian President Lukashenka to Moscow set for late February. It is said that Deputy Prime Minister Bolshakov and Belarusian Prime Minister Chyhir will initial a set of bilateral accords which, when approved by the leaders of the both states, will determine the boundaries of a new stage of Russian-Belarusian economic integration. In particular, it is planned to initial agreements on price policies and settlement of mutual claims.

Moldova

Moldova: International Forces 'May Be Deployed' in Transdniester

LD1402210596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1828 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, Feb 14 (Interfax) — Moldovan Foreign Minister Mikhail Popov told Interfax in Chisinau Wednesday [14 February] that if Russia insists on reducing its peacekeeping contingent in the Transdniester region, international forces including Russian and Ukrainian troops may be deployed there with the consent of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe].

Popov stressed that Moscow's proposal to turn the units of the former Russian 14th Army into peacekeeping forces is unacceptable for Moldova "for various reasons."

He expressed the hope that Russia will fulfil the commitments it assumed when joining the Council of Europe, including that to ratify the agreement on the 14th Army's pullout from Transdniester.

According to Popov, Chisinau expects Russia to withdraw its troops by the established deadline.

He said that the recent meeting between Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and Igor Smirnov, the leader of the self-proclaimed Transdniester Moldovan Republic, gives hope that talks between Chisinau and Tiraspol will become more fruitful.

In connection with this, Popov pointed out the important role of the OSCE permanent mission, as well as of Russian and Ukrainian presidential envoys, who act as mediators at the talks on the conflict's settlement.

Moldova: Diacov Advocates Compromise on Language Issue

AU1402145896 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, 13/02/1996 (BASA-press) — The official language name problem was not definitely solved when Parliament rejected President Mircea Snegur's initiative to legalize the term "Romanian Language" in the Constitution, Moldovan Deputy Speaker Dumitru Diacov of the Agrarian Democratic Party of Moldova [PDAM] told BASA-press. According to him, the Parliament's decision was caused by the political concourse of events, unfavourable for the Romanian language. "The problem was clear from the very beginning. Whatever the decision, some people will remain dissatisfied," said Diacov, adding "there aren't prerequisites right now to adopt a purely scientific version." Diacov said in light of upcoming presidential elections, the parties did not really intend to solve this problem, but to gain political dividends. "We will eventually revert to the version proposed by Speaker Petru Lucinschi, which would legalize both terms, but the parliamentary regulations allow to do that only during the autumn session," concluded Diacov. Valeriu Matei of the Peasants and Intellectuals Bloc (BTI), told BASA-press that parliamentary debates over official language name had an erroneous character — the emphasis was mainly laid on the "identity of languages." Such an approach is "unscientific, because these are not two languages, but one language only — Romanian," said Matei. He admitted the legislature might pass the proposal by Speaker Lucinschi, adding "honest people will continue to respect the truth, despite Parliament's decisions."

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Foreign Minister, Primakov To Discuss NATO Expansion

LD1402205096 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1456 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Marat Abulkhatin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beijing, 14 Feb — The tendency to expand NATO eastward "could cause a rapid deterioration of the situation on the European continent." This was stated today in an exclusive interview to ITAR-TASS by Kasymzhomart Tokayev, foreign minister of Kazakhstan, who is on an official visit here.

In the opinion of the head of Kazakhstan's foreign policy department, it is important to take account of two aspects of this problem. On the one hand we are faced with NATO's striving to expand its sphere of influence eastward. On the other hand one cannot fail to take account of the circumstance that a number of states are displaying concern and disquiet about this.

Concerning Russia's position on this matter, the minister noted that Kazakhstan understands Russia's concern. The problem of NATO's eastward expansion will be discussed during talks between the heads of the Foreign Ministries of Kazakhstan and Russia. Kasymzhomart Tokayev said that Yevgeniy Primakov, Russia's foreign minister, is tentatively scheduled to visit Kazakhstan on 21 February.

Kazakhstan: Tokayev on China Border Confidence-Building

MM1402134196 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Anatoliy Ladin: "Stronger Good-Neighborliness With China"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news conference in Almaty Foreign Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev said that at the forthcoming Shanghai meeting of the heads of state of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and the PRC an agreement will be signed on confidence-building measures along the common border. In particular, it will concentrate on increasing mutual trust among the sides by forming a 100-km zone from which certain types of arms will be withdrawn. An accord is also to be signed by the heads of state on the observance of measures to prevent conflict situations in the border zone.

"Relations between Kazkahstan and the PRC are being built on a good-neighborly basis," Kasymzhomart Tokayev said. "The demarcation of a 1,700-km sector of the border between Kazkahstan and China is almost complete. Only two sectors remain in dispute, and talks on them are continuing".

Kazakhstan: Details on Chevron Oil Workers' Dissatisfaction

LD1402164196 Almaty KARAVAN-BLITS in Russian 7 Feb 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "What is happening at Tengiz?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Atyrau — Something unprecedented happened in the workforce of the Tengizchevroil joint venture last year, or rather in the trade union organization of this enterprise, when more than 20 people who had left the trade union earlier, or had never been members, expressed a desire to become members of this public organization. How can one explain such a mass impulse? Obviously, because they understood that today, when each of us is left to fend for ourselves in the boundless market environment, there is nowhere else to turn for help. Trade unions, which have ceased to be "the implementers of the party's ideas and a school of communism," can protect their interests.

These very interests, according to the majority of the workers at the joint venture, are being seriously infringed upon. First of all, an insufficient salary, which does not exceed 150-200 dollars [per month] for the working classes. The conflict at Tengiz has been maturing for a long time, and has taken the form of open confrontation between the workers and the Tengizchevroil administration. The denouement began on 8 January, when a general trade union meeting of several parts of the joint venture took place in the watch settlement. The agenda was extremely clear-cut: demands to be presented to the administration of the Tengizchevroil joint venture.

Practically all the speakers said they were dissatisfied with the amount and the system of remuneration for their labor. They remembered that once, on arriving by the fantastically wealthy Caspian and leasing the unique oil field, the Americans announced loudly that wages at Tengiz would be the highest in the oil industry not only of Kazakhstan, but of the whole CIS. At first there were no complaints — both wages and conditions of life were good. However, inflation did not fall, while indexation of labor remuneration at the joint venture remained at the previous level. Then lo and behold, workers at all other oil enterprises of the region were receiving more than at Tengizchevroil.

As people said at the meeting, the money is already not enough to consider a wage. After all, one must take into account that the workers at the joint venture lack many of the benefits of Kazakh enterprises, such as free

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kindergarten facilities, and so on. The living conditions, of which the joint venture was once rightfully proud, and of which — why conceal it — many inhabitants of Atyrau were envious, have worsened. The rooms of the watch settlement are cold nowadays, the water supply is often irregular, and there is one television set — one for the whole "collective farm" — and that is switched on for only two hours.

However, the wages are the main point, of course. Having carried out an investigation, despite the veil of secrecy, the workers found out that citizens of Kazakhstan employed as administrators receive considerably more than they do. Even the cleaner who tidies the offices has wages comparable to the salary of a fourth-class metalworker.

Demands on the Tengizchevroil administration emerged from the meeting. The workers threatened that "if they are not satisfied, we will come out on strike". The demands were passed on to the Tengizchevroil management.

A second meeting was held, on 15 January, to which, as the participants reckoned, officials from the management would come. Alas, they hoped and waited in vain: only a Tengizchevroil public relations representative appeared — someone with absolutely no right to make any promises. The only thing that she could report was that the management of the joint venture was ready to cooperate but, before talking to the workers, it would like to prepare itself seriously. These words aroused heated protest from the overflowing hall.

It is clear to all that the Americans are thinking up some decisions. As far back as two years ago, the trade union organization drew up a collective contract with the management. It has been studied and analyzed ever since, in America no less. Having repeated their demands once more at that meeting, the trade unionists again demanded a face-to-face meeting with the management, setting this third meeting for 22 January. True, it did not take place at the set time. As the working group for holding negotiations with the administration found out, the American management had most likely flown to Almaty.

"We fully support the demands of the Tengizchevroil workers," says the chairman of the regional council of trade unions of the oil industry, A. Bisenov. "In fact, the question of the wage increase and improvement of labor conditions at the joint venture was raised at our plenum as far back as 8 November, so the American side was informed perfectly well of the people's dissatisfaction both with the wages and the worsening living conditions. It is not businesslike of such a famous enterprise to pay even less than at smaller and poorer oil organizations of the republic. I am sure that nowhere in the world do Chevron workers receive 150 dollars for their labor."

We have learned from sources close to the Tengizchevroil management that a 44 percent pay increase for the Tengizchevroil workers is allegedly being prepared in Almaty, where the American bosses went. The position of the workers themselves, backed by their trade union, is absolutely clear: such an increase, which looks more like a tip, does not suit them. This means that the conflict in the Tengizchevroil joint venture continues, and it is too early to draw a line under this affair.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan: Presidential Address on Nationwide Referendum

LD1402191696 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 14 Feb 96

["Address to the Nation" by Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev on the referendum held on 10 February, in Bishkek; date not given — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear compatriots! I express to you my deep and heartfelt gratitude for your active participation in the nationwide referendum on 10 February and for the support of the majority of votes to the draft law making amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was put to the vote. I view your support for the question put to the nationwide ballot right after the presidential elections as an expression of your immense faith in the democratic changes going on in our country and in the future of economic reforms, and as a great responsibility entrusted to me as head of state. We have received confirmation of our people's trust and the authority required for the full-blooded execution of our duty. The rights and obligations of every branch of power and their powers have now been determined clearly and unequivocally.

I know that you are now hopefully expecting me to make decisive efforts and take urgent steps aimed at improving the people's life. Yes, it is time to take such decisive steps, and they will be taken without delay. In view of this, I think you can familiarize yourselves in detail with the principal areas of our further development in my message to a joint session of the chambers of the Supreme Council, which will be held soon.

Nevertheless, I would like to note that the main thing that is necessary — and on which work will begin now that we have received nationwide trust — is to reinforce state discipline and to increase the responsibility of and

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demands made on state employees at all levels. The strengthening of our state system is likewise inseparably connected with these tasks. Without this it is no longer possible to continue with any degree of success to reform the judicial system and local self-government and to pursue economic reform to a successful end. The hour has struck for representatives of the judiciary and the executive to show due awareness of their high responsibility before the people and state for the meticulous and conscientious execution of their duties.

Esteemed deputies! Some of you may have conflicting political views on some matters. However, you know well that we are all obliged to act in a coordinated manner, shoulder-to-shoulder, on any matter connected with the people's interests. This is why I believe that every effort made after the referendum and aimed ultimately at improving the lives of our long-suffering people will meet with your most energetic support. Starting now, there is no serious reason to continue contrived disputes and idle arguments about words. We all know well what the main thing is: the long-term course of the policy of our young state. It is to build a democratic society based on a market economy and to strengthen our statehood. We have no goal more noble than this or policy superior to it. I want to note that opportunities are appearing for us to strengthen our republic's economy and to achieve considerable progress in the economy in the near future. All that we need is the coordinated efforts of every branch of power and nationwide support. The serious trial of the transitional period, which will test the strength of our unity and cohesion on our difficult path, still lies ahead. The key to our future progress lies in treasuring the unity of our people, the integrity of the state, and the inviolability of the Constitution.

Dear compatriots! Aware that as president I am much indebted to you, I want to assure you that I will direct all my knowledge, experience, and energy to achieving a better future and a happy life in our common home, Kyrgyzstan, for each of my fellow citizens, whose well-being and happiness are well-being and happiness for me.

Thank you very much again for your support. Askar Akayev, president of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Foreign Minister Affirms Commitment to Peace

LD1502113596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0946 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Galina Gridneva and Alisher Niyazov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 15 Feb — The Tajik leadership will continue to strictly observe the frameworks of agreements signed at the inter-Tajik peace talks, first of all the protocol on reaching a civil peace in the republic. At the same time the Tajik authorities are ready to seek compromise in the frameworks of the acting constitution and the existing power structures, the head of the Tajik official delegation at the inter-Tajik peace talks, Tajik Foreign Minister Talbak Nazarov told ITAR-TASS today.

Touching upon the package of issues connected with the creation of a consultative organ, Nazarov recalled that the initial idea of setting up a forum of peoples of Tajikistan belonged to the opposition. Now the opposition leaders are proposing to set up a council for national reconciliation. "Nobody is against reconciliation, but when our delegation has analyzed the proposal, it turned out that the opposition was talking about dissolving the national parliament and building a new legislative organ on its basis. Moreover, the opposition thinks that the council should be led by their representative," Nazarov said.

Nazarov thinks this idea goes against the republic's constitution and is not in line with the results of the presidential and parliamentary elections which have been recognized by the world community. The head of the official Tajik delegation recalled that the United Nations Organization in the person of its special envoy to Tajikistan, Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, regarded this idea as "too extreme" and put forward its own proposal on the settlement of the Tajik crisis. This proposal was submitted for consideration to the conflicting sides and the observers. "We are ready to work on this plan," Nazarov said.

The official delegation has suggested that opposition leaders Haji Akbar Turajonzoda and Sayed Abdullo Nuri should speak at a session of the Tajik parliament about their views on the progress of the inter-Tajik dialogue but the opposition leaders have not yet said whether they accepted or rejected this invitation, the minister said. He thinks that at the current round of talks it would be expedient to conclude two agreements - to extend the memorandum on a temporary cease-fire

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and to adopt a document on setting up a consultative forum of the Tajik people.

Touching upon the recent developments in eastern Tajikistan, and first of all, the armed attack on 11 February on a border troops convoy in Komsomolabad district which resulted in massive human casualties, Nazarov described it as an inhuman barbaric act denounced by the world community. This action does not facilitate a constructive dialogue leading to a political settlement of the conflict. The government of Tajikistan does not see any other alternative to the peaceful settlement of the inter-Tajik crisis. The other way is a civil war. It means new losses. It is a blind alley, the minister said.

Tajikistan: ITAR-TASS Report on Negotiations Denied

LD1402110296 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Professor Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, first deputy leader of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and head of the opposition negotiating delegation at the [Ashgabat] peace talks with the Dushanbe regime, has dismissed as nonsense a Russian ITAR-TASS news agency report that the talks are continuing and that Professor Sayed Abdullo Nuri, leader of the Islamic Movement and the United Opposition forces of Tajikistan, is to address the present parliament of Tajikistan.

Professor Turajonzoda said that this news agency has strayed far from reality in both cases. First, he added, the meeting scheduled for Tuesday was not held because Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, the UN secretary general's special envoy to Tajikistan, had not returned from the UN headquarters in New York.

Second, the supreme leadership of the opposition has not decided whether Professor Sayed Abdullo Nuri will address the regime's parliament.

As is known, Talbak Nazarov, head of the government negotiating delegation and the regime's foreign minister, proposed that the opposition representatives put their demands to the present parliament. It should be mentioned that the opposition considers the election of the present parliament, and other political steps by the Rakhmanov government, to be illegal, and do not recognize it.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan: Border Guard Chiefs Report on Events of 1995

LD1502103696 Ashgabat ESGER in Russian 1 Feb 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Turkmenistan took a very serious step last year toward strengthening world peace by acquiring the status of permanent neutrality. However, this in no way means that the time has come for universal disarmament. Contraband mafia structures recognize neither their own nor other peoples' peace-loving intentions. Therefore, Turkmenistan is forced to increase the combat readiness and mobility of its border troops. President Saparmyrat Turkmenbashy has assigned this task to their command. It is being implemented to a high standard.

The results of the service and combat activity of Turkmenistan's border troops for 1995, which were summed up at a meeting of officers of the country's border troops directorate, graphically testify to this. The meeting was attended by: Batyr Sarjayev, deputy chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan; Akmurad Mulkamanov, a head of department of the country's Cabinet of Ministers; Col-Gen Saparmyrat Seydov, chairman of the Committee for National Security; Maj-Gen Altybay Charyyev, deputy interior minister; Justice Minister Prof Tagandurdy Hallyyev; Supreme Court chairman Amanmurad Kakabayev; Economic Court chairman Nurmukhammedov, and other interested parties.

The commander of Turkmenistan's border troops, Col-Gen Akmurad Kabulov, opened the meeting [passage omitted]

The chief of staff of Turkmenistan's border guards, Maj-Gen Geldy Amanov, spoke in detail about the state of affairs on the border and set out the results of developments and of the border guards' service and combat activity in 1995 and their tasks and principal ways of improving that activity in 1996. [passage omitted]

The border guards actively promote the implementation of Turkmen President Saparmyrat Turkmenbashy's order to turn the country's borders into borders of friendship, fraternity and cooperation, Amanov said.

At the same time, the border guards' service and combat activities in 1995 were carried out in the circumstances of a difficult, dynamically developing situation on the border. The main characteristic of this was the fact that, under the influence of mainly external factors and the changing internal social and economic conditions, a negative trend towards an intensification of criminal

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tension on the border developed, connected primarily with the increase in smuggling and drug-trafficking. Intelligence activity by the espionage services of foreign states against Turkmenistan continued.

Smuggling with the aim of moving arms, narcotics, raw materials and commodities across the border was stepped up on several sections of the state border. This was particularly serious in the Takhta-Bazar and Sarakhs areas, where criminal activity started to acquire features of organized crime, and the tactic of shameless breaches, sometimes armed, of the state border prevailed in the violators' actions.

In 1995 the border population of contiguous states and citizens of Turkmenistan committed over 1,700 illegal actions on the border. By comparison with the same period of 1994, the number of violations of the state border, especially for the purpose of smuggling, increased by 50 per cent, and the number of attempts to steal materials, livestock and property from citizens doubled. The border regime situation remains difficult, especially in relation to maintenance of the border line and border signs, livestock movements and water use in border rivers, and illegal activity relating to the illegal catching of seafood in the coastal section of Turkmenistan's territorial waters has been stepped up in the southeastern zone of the Caspian Sea.

As a result of the sharp rise in the flow of freight and passengers at crossing-points on the state border, there has been a significant increase in the number of people trying illegally to enter and leave Turkmenistan and to transport raw materials and commodities.

Despite the difficult situation, the border guards fulfilled their tasks to ensure the protection of the state border successfully, on the whole.

The facts provide clear evidence of this. Last year more than 570 violators of the state border were detained, over 1,200 violations of the border regime and other illegal actions were prevented, and more than two tonnes of narcotics, over 90 firearms, more than 7,000 pieces of ammunition, including hand grenades, about 14,000 US dollars, over five million rials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, more than one million afghanis of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and over 700,000 [Turkmen] manats were confiscated. At the same time, frontier details were forced to use weapons in 60 cases in order to repel armed assaults and to stop armed resistance.

Checkpoint staff also made a worthy contribution towards safeguarding the border. Last year they detained about 40 border violators and confiscated over 35 firearms, about 70 kg of drugs and contraband worth one million manats in 23 cases.

Maj-Gen Geldy Amanov noted that the Bakharden, Kakin and Sarakhs border units had done best in 1995 at tackling their border protection tasks.

At the same time, border breaches by violators, audacious cases of theft of materials and livestock and incidents and crimes in the service show that side by side with positive results in 1995, there was a failure to avoid serious shortcomings and errors in the border guards' service and combat activity.

The meeting revealed reasons for these negative phenomena and put forward ways of eliminating them.

A meeting of the united command of Turkmenistan's border troops was held the same day.

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Armenia

Armenia: Deputy Speaker Meets Greek Speaker During Athens Visit

NC1402213096 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 2000 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Karapet Rubinyan, deputy chairman of the Armenian National Assembly, who is on an official visit to Athens to attend the session of the Economy and Trade Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, met with Apostolos Kaklamanis, president of the Chamber of Deputies of Greece. Karapet Rubinyan handed him an invitation from Babken Ararktsyan, chairman of the Armenian National Assembly, to pay an official visit to Armenia.

Matters relating to multi-sided Armenian-Greek cooperation were discussed during the meeting. Both sides emphasized the need for the two countries to cooperate in international organizations.

Armenia: Party Leader, Deputy Minister Said To Oppose Gobel Plan

NC1402211196 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 2000 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] LRAGIR today published reactions against the Radio Liberty interview with Paul Gobel, a former U.S. State Department official and well-known politician.

Radio Liberty has asked Aram Sargisyan, leader of the Armenian Democratic Party, and Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan to comment on the issue.

Mr. Sargisyan said that such an approach should be rejected from the outset, for it inevitably raises the question of population displacement and that could lead to a new war.

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan said the following on the same issue: We are not ready to discuss the issue of territorial exchange during the talks on resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Naturally, I cannot say anything concrete until I am fully acquainted with Gobel's proposals. The fact is that no such issue is being discussed at present.

Armenia: Russia's Nikolayev Suggests 'Common Security System'

NC1402131696 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 0343 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, February 13 (NOYAN TAPAN)— "We'd like to have a common security system in Transcaucasia, which would ensure CIS security", — Chief of Russia's Federal Border Troops, General Andrey Nikolayev said. He said, if Azerbaijan refuses to be a part of this system, it will be a tripartite cooperation between Russia, Armenia and Georgia. The main objective of the current visit is to strengthen cooperation and ensure security of common borders.

General Nikolayev expressed content with results of the January 12 meeting with President Levon Ter-Petrosyan. He said that 4 protocols had been prepared, however, preferred not to comment on them. Nikolayev said that Boris Yeltsin's order had been fulfilled.

General Nikolayev described Armenian-Russian relations as positive, saying that Presidents of Russia and Armenia are unanimous on that issue.

Armenia was Nikolayev's first stop-over in his tour of Transcaucasia.

Armenia: Karabakh 'President' Discusses U.S. Trip

NC1402140896 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 0910 GMT 13 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, February 13 (NOYAN TAPAN)— Karabakh President Robert Kocharyan said at a news conference held Tuesday in Karabagh that he visited the United States of America on the invitation of the American Assembly of Armenia. He described his visit as useful and efficient. Mr. Kocharyan said that at the meetings with UN Undersecretary Aldo Ayelo and a number of Senators, he and Foreign Minister Arkadi Ghukasyan presented Karabakh's stand on the settlement of the conflict. Mr. Ghukasyan said that U.S. top representatives expressed readiness to assist in the resolution of the Karabakh problem.

Stressing that the resolution of the Karabakh conflict is the OSCE Minsk group's prerogative Arkadi Ghukasyan voiced hope that the UN would not hold away from the settlement of the conflict. He stressed the role the Armenian diaspora could play in defending Karabakh's interests and rejecting resolutions, which would oppose those interests. The Armenian diaspora should intensify its activities in the USA and use its unlimited political and economic potential and influence, according to Ghukasyan.

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Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Receives Russia's Frontier Chief Nikolayev

NC1402211096 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev today received a delegation headed by Andrey Nikolayev, director of the Russian Federal Frontier Service.

Commenting on Azerbaijan-Russian relations at the meeting, our head of state noted that it is necessary to further deepen the friendly and good-neighborly ties between our countries. Touching upon the results of the CIS heads of state summit in Moscow on 18-19 January, on the importance of the agreements signed in the field of economy and trade, on his meeting with President Yeltsin, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, Foreign Minister Primakov, on Russia's efforts to peacefully resolve the Karabakh conflict, and on cooperation for the defense of the borders, Geydar Aliyev informed the guest that all of them have an important bearing on relations between Azerbaijan and Russia.

Director of the Russian Federal Frontier Service Andrey Nikolayev said the positive (?trend) in relations between Azerbaijan and Russia is in the interest of both states. He touched upon border and customs services for people travelling between the two countries and on the need to coordinate joint work to prevent criminal elements, narcotics, and illegal immigrants from crossing the borders.

Prime Minister Fuad Guliyev, Commander of the Border Troops Abbasali Novruzov, and National Security Minister Namik Abbasov attended the meeting.

Azerbaijan: Prospect for Oil Wealth Impact Downplayed

964F1065A Baku ZERKALO in Russian 3 Feb 96 No 5, p 9

[Article by E. Guseynov, ZERKALO correspondent: "The Kuwait Mirage: In the Next Millennium We May See Not a Flourishing Country of the Kuwait Type, But a Caucasian Colombia Mired in Debts and Drug Mafia Showdowns"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tired of the reforms that began as far back as 1985, the population is more and more frequently running into mythopoeia. The biggest myth is that Azerbaijan is one of the world's most important oil-owning countries. Mythopoeia is an undertaking that is by no means as inoffensive as it might seem. The fuss that has been raised over Azerbaijani oil has influenced and continues to influence the formation of a psychology of dependence among a large part of the population. Of course, it would be possible not to debunk this myth, using it as anesthesia for society's social ills. But this delusion is having a greater and greater influence on the formation of public opinion. A majority of the population dream of only one thing: To live to see the day when Azerbaijan is transformed, if not into a second Kuwait, at minimum into a Saudi Arabia. And "specialists" and journalists are relishing the details of our happy future in many ways.

No matter how painful it might be, it is necessary to say that all this is nothing more than a nice story. I repeat, it is possible that such a story may even be justified, inasmuch as hopelessness is the worst method of lowering social tension. But as a result of the fact that we are tying our whole faith and our hopes to a myth, the sobering up will be extremely painful.

It is necessary to start from the total reserves of oil carbons. Their amount is raised artificially for political purposes, and the population gains the impression that Azerbaijan is comparable to Arab countries in terms of oil reserves. This, unfortunately, is not so. Oil reserves in Azerbaijan constitute only a hundredth of Arab reserves. It is impossible to err here, inasmuch as in Azerbaijan, in contrast, for example, to Western Siberia, a majority of the promising oil and gas-bearing territories have long since been studied. Therefore, knowing the real situation with regard to oil reserves, it can safely be said that talk about huge oil reserves in Azerbaijan is a bluff.

It is calculated that there are several dozen fields in the world whose total oil reserves are more than all of Azerbaijan's oil by a factor of two to three. Our oil in a mid-term and long-term perspective will not be able to play the role in the world that is being played by Arab or Russian oil because there simply is not that much of it. It is true that Azerbaijan's proximity to attractive sales markets for petroleum products in the short term makes it a very suitable object for the expansion of TNK's [transnational corporations]. But unfortunately we will never be able to reach a level of income from oil that is comparable to that of the Arabs.

In order to understand this it is sufficient to make a superficial analysis of the cost of extracting oil in Azerbaijan and Kuwait and the cost of its transportation to world markets. The average cost of extracting one tonne of oil in Azerbaijan is approximately equal to $51-55. This applies to fields that are being worked at the present time. Considering that a majority of the oil reserves of Azerbaijan are found in deep-water sectors of the Caspian, which are difficult to access and, moreover, situated 80-150 kilometers from shore,

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which extremely complicates their development, it can be assumed that the cost of one tonne of oil acquired in the fields of the "contract of the century" and others will fluctuate from $32 to $38. Meanwhile, in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia the cost of extracted oil fluctuates from $3 to $4.

Further, the transportation of oil from field to shore will require major capital expenditures. The creation of the infrastructure (pipelines and the like) for its subsequent delivery to sea terminals will cost another $2.5 to $4 billion. All these expenditures will lie like a heavy burden on the cost of the oil. After the deduction of all of amortization calculations, it is necessary to take into account tariff rates for oil transportation through a pipeline. This will amount to $18 to $22 per tonne. Plus, in addition to all this, there is also the cost of delivery of the oil by tankers—from $12 to $24 per tonne. In summary, taking into account the fact that the average world price for oil in the short-term and long-term outlook will fluctuate in the area of $115-$128 per tonne, and with all the aforementioned expenditures, the profit gets up to about $25 per tonne. From this sum Azerbaijan is supposed to get 65 percent—$16.25.

The maximum amount of oil exported from Azerbaijan will amount to 42-45 million tonnes—in monetary expression, after deduction of the indicated expenditures, it will amount to a maximum of $731 million. Kuwait receives more than $10 billion annually from the sale of oil. Given a population of 700,000 persons, this amounts to $15,000 for each resident of the country annually. For each of us, at best, the total will be $73. In addition, now a big part of revenue from export operations is appropriated by a small group of persons. It would be naive to suppose that it would be any different with future oil incomes.

Therefore it is necessary now to establish an economic base in the processing branches. If we want to use oil revenue effectively, it is necessary to direct it to investments inside the country. The experience of the oil-producing countries indicates that in cases where the activity of the government is guided by oil euphoria, this leads to catastrophe. Azerbaijanis should not set their hopes on the example of Kuwait. It is much more useful for us to keep the experience of Colombia in mind, a country for which actually the same thing was predicted in the 1970's that is now predicted for Azerbaijan. The leadership of the country did not analyze the structure of oil revenue, which was speculative as a result of the fact that an extremely high price had developed in the market—$191 per tonne. But when the price for oil slumped, the high cost of Colombian oil production was felt. As a result, many large oil companies suspended their activities in Colombia, and the country, which had gotten accustomed to continuous hard currency infusions from the sale of oil, switched to the production and sale of narcotics.

To claim that the living standard of the population will not rise when oil contracts begin to be implemented would be a falsehood. There will be an improvement, just as there was in Colombia and Nigeria in the mid-1970's. It was expressed in the fact that the general price level declined owing to the acquisition of imported products and commodities for oil dollars. But a sobering up took place immediately after this, and for a population that had become accustomed to consuming more, it turned out to be extremely painful. The Soviet Union, which was pushed into economic ruin by an excessive orientation on revenue from the sale of oil, can also be cited as an example.

A degenerated system of distribution of financial resources has been forming for over 70 years in Azerbaijan. The proposed revenue from oil could intensify these negative manifestations even more. As a result, there is a danger of arriving at the twenties of the next century with no oil and a catastrophic social situation. It is difficult to expect that a population which has gotten even more accustomed to "easy money" will adapt to the realities of a market economy.

It is also impossible not to consider another danger engendered by stereotypes. Counting on revenue in the future, we eagerly take on debt in large amounts. The total foreign debt increases catastrophically. We could greet the beginning of the next millennium not with a flourishing country of the Kuwait type, but with a Caucasian Colombia that is mired in debts and drug mafia showdowns.

In order to prevent such a development of events, it is necessary for all of us right now to understand that only the creative labor of the ENTIRE population is capable of leading the economy out of the dead end. It is necessary actually to operate as if Azerbaijan did not possess oil. Let the income from oil be a surprise that will help the country in its effective development. But in any case, new technological production that produces products that enjoy demand on world markets should become the basis of the economy. Fairy tale oil themes are nothing but a mirage. The time will come when we will understand that this is merely a delusion. But then it will be too late to correct anything.

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Georgia

Georgia: Ardzinba Agrees To Join Two-Component Georgian Federation

LD1502100896 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 0925 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 15 Feb — An Iberia correspondent has been told from Moscow that after meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, Abkhaz separatist leader Vladislav Ardzinba said he agrees to Abkhazia's joining a single federal state of Georgia, provided that the latter is comprised of two components: Georgia and Abkhazia (similar to the model of former Czechoslovakia).

In Ardzinba's words, Abkhazia categorically opposes joining the Georgian federation as one of its 12 component regions, in other words, Abkhazia demands a two-component federation.

Georgia: Ardzinba, Grachev Discuss Abkhaz Peace-Keeping

LD1502110796 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 0925 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 15 Feb — An IBERIA correspondent has been told from the Georgian embassy in Russia that on 14 February Abkhaz separatist leader Vladislav Ardzinba met with Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev. They discussed the changing of the mandate of the Russian peacekeeping forces which are deployed in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone.

Neither Ardzinba nor Grachev have commented on the results of the meeting.

Georgia: Moscow Agrees to Georgian Observers on Abkhaz Border

LD1402125896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1143 GMT 14 Feb 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoriya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI February 14 (Itar-Tass) — Russia has agreed to allow Georgian observers to its border with Abkhazia to monitor the blockade of the separatist region in compliance with the decision of CIS heads of state adopted at the Moscow summit on January 19.

"The Georgian side believes it necessary to have its own observers who would control and participate in the implementation of the decision of CIS heads of state. We have agreed to that opinion of the Georgian side", visiting Russian Federal Border Service director Andrey Nikolayev told reporters here late on Tuesday.

Tbilisi is consistently looking for Abkhazia's isolation trying to make it accept the status of an autonomous republic within Georgia.

Abkhazia borders on Russia along the Psou river and is cut from the rest of the world by Georgia and the Black sea.

Georgian Frontier Troops commander Valery Chkheidze told Tass that he was satisfied with the results of the talks with Nikolayev.

The Russian border chief also met Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and the talks focused on the enforcement of the isolation decision.

Early on Wednesday Nikolayev left for Baku, Azerbaijan, which will be the third country after Armenia and Georgia on his Caucasian trip.

The main task of the director is to enhance the protection of Russian southern borders in view of the conflict in Chechnya.

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Estonia

Estonia: Foreign Minister Views Relations With Russia

WS1502085796 Tallinn BNS in English 1320 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 14, BNS — A meeting of the foreign ministers of Estonia and Russia, put off by Russia twice recently, is now expected to take place in April.

Estonian Foreign Minister Siim Kallas in remarks to BNS on Wednesday said Moscow had first rescheduled a meeting planned for Feb. 22 — to Feb. 26 — and then asked to postpone it until April.

"Such a postponement is not a good sign," Kallas told BNS during a stopover in Moscow, while on his trip to Azerbaijan.

The Estonian foreign minister said there had been no major changes in the Estonian-Russian relations recently, not to speak of progress on important issues.

"Search for new openings is going on via different channels," he said, but declined to elaborate.

Kallas said his assessment of the future of the Estonian-Russian relations was "cautiously hopeful". But he added at once that a pessimistic forecast could prove justified as well.

Kallas said his Russian counterpart Yevgenniy Primakov was considerably more unbound in his actions than Andrey Kozyrev, from whom Primakov took over in January. "He can allow himself more freedom of decision and his hands are less tied," Kallas said.

The foreign minister said Estonia had to prepare with utmost care for the meeting with the Russian foreign minister.

"Primakov's meetings with representatives of other countries so far have showed that he is a very stong opponent to deal with," Kallas said. "We cannot go to the meeting with Primakov just to be shown our place. Our meeting must be prepared so well that it had a practical outcome. Otherwise we may make fools of ourselves in the eyes of the world," Kallas said.

He said there was no way how Estonia could back down on its demand that Russia recognize the Tartu peace treaty of 1920. "If there is no reference to the Tartu peace (accord) in the border agreement, it simply won't be ratified by parliament," he said.

Kallas said efforts continued to find new formulas to link the border agreement to the 1920 peace treaty within these confines. "But one cannot rule out that an additional agreement on this will be concluded," the Estonian foreign minister said, again declining to give more details.

Estonia: Yeltsin To Sign Decree Threatening Freight Transit

LD1502115296 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1100 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is drawing up a decree by Boris Yeltsin which could halt the transit of Russian goods through Estonia.

An Estonian diplomat, who wished to remain anonymous, told the Baltic News Service [BNS] today that this was a populist draft which serves Yeltsin's interests at the forthcoming presidential elections. The draft decree includes a reference to the continuing discrimination against Russians in Estonia. The diplomat told BNS that with such a draft the Yeltsin's team is trying to catch the votes which would go to ultra-nationalist candidates.

The transit of Russian goods is important for the Estonian economy. Over the last year several Estonian and foreign companies have started building large liquid fuel terminals which are relying on export of Russian oil products.

Lithuania

Lithuania: Peacekeepers To Leave for Bosnia 19 Feb

LD1402222296 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2000 GMT 14 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A Lithuanian platoon of peacemakers, Litbat-4, is to leave Denmark for Bosnia on 19 February.

Speaking to journalists on Wednesday, Lithuanian Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius said that the greatest danger to NATO troops going to Bosnia are posed by mines of which there are millions on the territory of former Yugoslavia.

The Lithuanian peace-keeping platoon will participate in NATO's mission within the ranks of the Danish battalion which will be part of the trans Nordic-(?Polish) brigade. The brigade will be a unit of the U.S. division. The Lithuanian servicemen will be stationed 150 kilometers northwest of Tuzla. [passage omitted]

On Wednesday, Defense Minister Linkevicius returned from Denmark where he watched the preparations of the Lithuanian platoon for the mission in Bosnia. According

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to the defense minister, the weapons of the Lithuanian peace-keepers will be different from the weapons they had in earlier missions in former Yugoslavia. [passage omitted]

The defense minister told reporters that he agreed with his Danish counterpart, Hans Haekkerup, that Lithuania will dedicate a whole company instead of a platoon for the next mission of the Danish battalion.

Lithuania: Seimas Approves New Prime Minister

LD1502113196 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1100 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Lithuanian Seimas [parliament] has just approved the proposal by the Lithuanian president [Algirdas Brazauskas] to appoint Laurynas Mindaugas Stankevicius as prime minister.

Seventy members of the Seimas voted in favor of this decision, six voted against, and two members abstained from voting. The resolution became effective from the moment it was passed.

Lithuania: Background on New Prime Minister Stankevicius

LD1502123996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1148 GMT 15 Feb 96

[By Vladas Burbulis]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS February 15 (Itar-Tass) — On Thursday, the Lithuanian Sejm [Seimas — Parliament] confirmed a Presidential decree appointing Laurynas Mindaugas Stankevicius, 60, as the new Prime Minister of the country. Prior to the appointment he temporarily performed the duties of the Head of Government and was the Minister for Reform Management and Local Self-Government.

Stankevicius is a member of the ruling Democratic Labor Party of Lithuania (LDDP). He will supersede Adolfas Slezevicius, LDDP leader, who, on a recommendation from President Algirdas Brazauskas, was dismissed by the Sejm on February 8 for a scandal connected with the "timely" withdrawal of a deposit (about 30,000 U.S. dollars) at heightened annual interest at a commercial bank which subsequently suffered a financial collapse.

Lithuania: Parliament Endorses New Bank Chairman

LD1502124996 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1200 GMT 15 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The [Lithuanian] Seimas [Parliament] has just approved the proposal by the president [Algirdas Brazauskas] to appoint [former finance minister] Reinoldijus Sarkinas to the post of chairman of the board of the Bank of Lithuania.

Seventy-six members of the Seimas voted in favour of this decision, two voted against, and seven members abstained. The resolution became effective the moment it was passed.

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